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APRIL 1977 $1.00 UK60p

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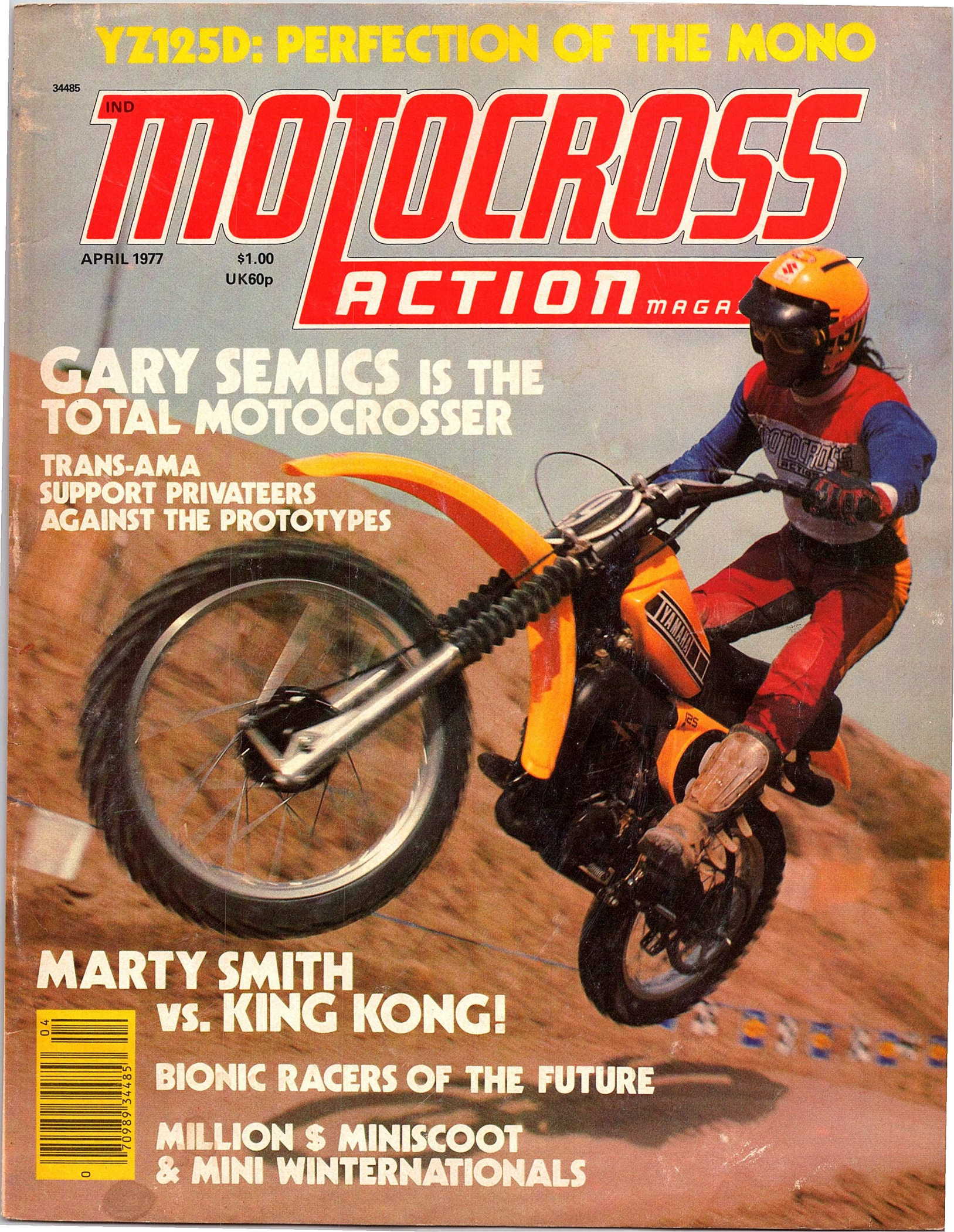

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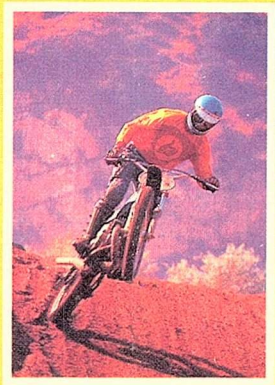

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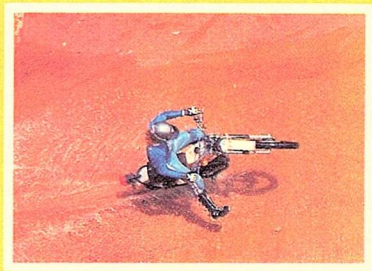

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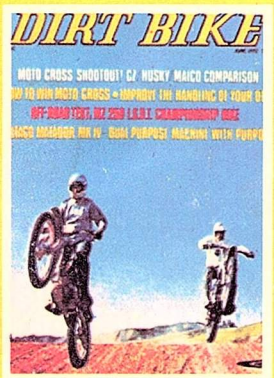

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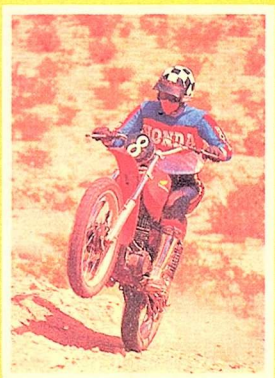

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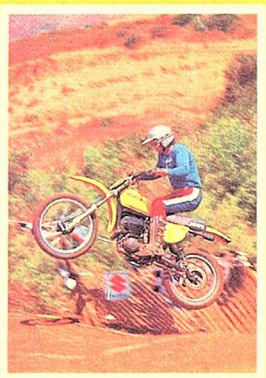

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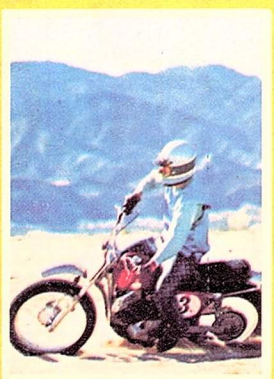

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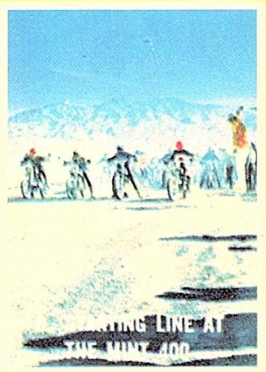

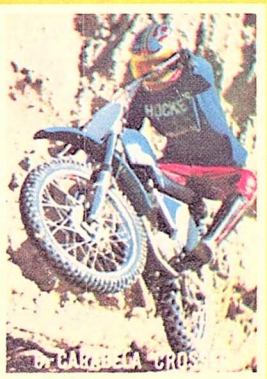

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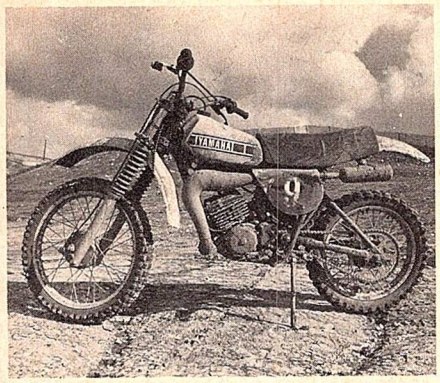

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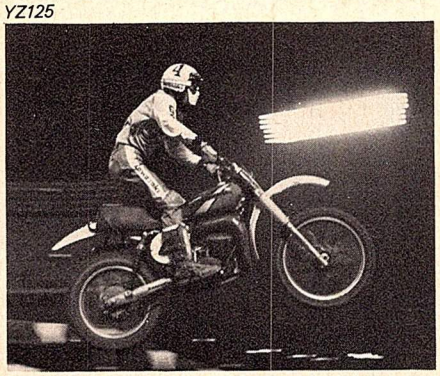

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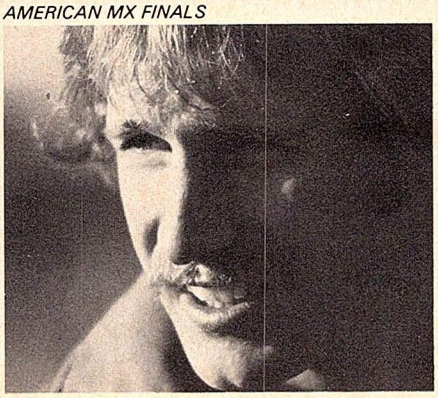

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MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE

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VOLUME FIVE
NUMBER FOUR

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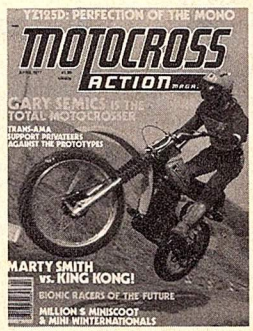
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COVER: FMF's Gary Ogden tests the in-flight stability of Yamaha's completely redesigned YZ125. Find the whole story starting on page 24. Photo by Paul Boudreau.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE APRIL 7

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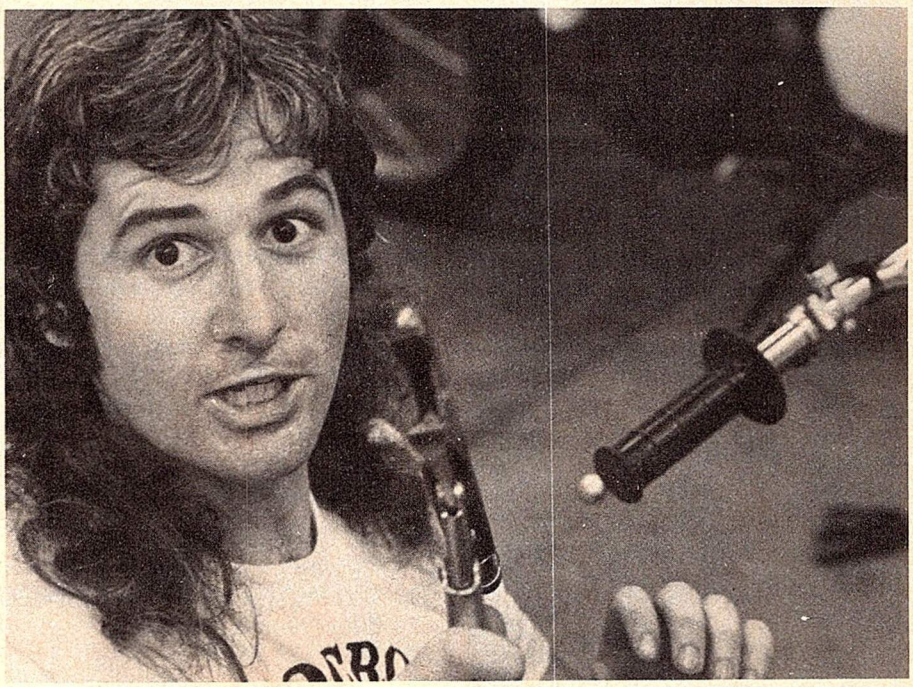
on the mainjet

by dick miller

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dick Miller is still out of action but well on the road to recovery. This month we'd like to introduce Jody Weisel, who recently joined the MXA staff after serving in an editorial capacity for both Cycle News Central *and* Cycle News West.



By Jody Weisel

So you want to be a motocross star? Standing out there amid the road of expensive Grand Prix machinery wearing a Jofa and goodie guard. Well, you came to the right man. Hard work, talent and energy have been my secret all the way to the top of this dog-eat-dog world of *Quik-buck* motocross stardom. A year ago I was losing and starving. Today I'm not starving. Bouncing berms and walloping whoops is a hard way to make a living, and nobody can make it by themselves. The first tip is that you find some great motocrosser to emulate! I suggest that you start with me.

In order to become a great racer many people attend motocross schools. This in itself is not harmful, but beware of what they try to pass off as inside tips. There are several areas of racing that those flounders teaching motocross schools stress, and I would like to refute some of the more popular misconceptions that these squids are passing out.

Some old champions, turned pedagogue, try and tell you what super shape it is necessary to be in to be a motocross star. Hogwash! You may think it is necessary to keep yourself in tip-top physical shape to be a winner: NOT TRUE! I personally train only twice a day — putting my pants on in the morning and taking them off at night (one leg at a time, I might add).

The second popular misconception is that you should prepare your bike meticulously before each race. Don't fall for this line. This weekly maintenance claptrap has been circulating around the motocross racing world for years. It is time somebody laid it to rest. I don't know what you're doing on the

Continued on page 64

DISCOVER:

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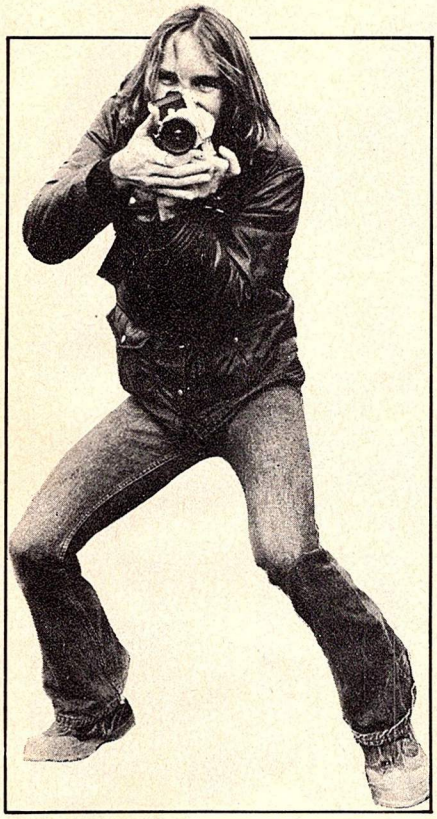

by paul boudreau

No stone gets left unturned in my pursuit of motocross excellence. This time I tried the combination of my two weaknesses: racing and junk food. I got the idea from watching the pro racers gulp down huge quantities of honey and other such sweet stuff just before a moto so that the instant energy derived from the raw sugar could be effectively utilized in the course of the following 40-minute heat. I, of course, developed my own system. Of all the various confectionary delights that have titilated my taste buds, none carries a more concentrated payload of creamy carbohydrates than a single Winchell's jelly donut. Therefore I chose this tasty pastry as the prime cut of my racing program.

Race after race I would sit in the pits and munch down a big, juicy Winchell's jelly donut just before pushing my bike up to the starting line. It never seemed to help any, producing no noticeable effects other than a small pocket of gas in my duodenum which I would normally burp into my Jofa around the halfway point. But the opportunity of gobbling such a scrumptious crumpet for a good reason rather than pure self-indulgence was one I couldn't resist.

Then I started noticing something strange. Since I had really been making an effort to cut down on junk food, I would sometimes go the whole week without touching so much as a Vanilla Wafer, the result being that the race day jelly donut would hit me like the roost off a 400 Maico. I'd be sitting on the starting line gathering my concentration when the first phalanx of sugar would march into my bloodstream. First I'd sense a fluttering in my middle like someone had released a canary inside my stomach. Then a tingling would spread over my body, rolling down my legs and slithering around my arms until my fingers and toes felt like they were little Fourth of July sparklers. My entire system would go on alert as each organ reacted to the sudden influx of sugar. Strange siren sounds echoed inside my helmet to the beat of junkafied blood coursing into my head. I was in a bakery buzz, peaking on pastry, high on a jelly donut.

This was a development I had not considered, so the next day I visited a friend of mine who works at a computer center. Carefully computing the weight of the jelly donut, my own body weight, the air temperature and other critical factors, he calculated that in order to experience the full effects of this expanded state of consciousness brought on by the ingestion of the donut, I would have to woof it down, or "shoot up" as he called it, 30 seconds before the start of my race. No prob, said I, and the following Sunday I was sitting on the starting line with the little white bag of happiness held tenderly twixt my legs.

The two-minute sign went up and I calmly started my engine. No one noticed the little sack because they were into their own trips, psyching themselves for the race. Little did they realize that I held the secret of success nestled in my Torsten Hallmans: an ellipsoid of eggs, flour and suger baked to perfection, dusted with a smooth layer of fine powdered sugar and injected with a gooey globule of the most delectable strawberry jelly.

The one-minute sign went up and I took a deep breath and relaxed. I had nothing to worry about. Everything was under control. With 30 seconds to go, I reached into the little bag and felt the soft warmth of Winchell's finest through the leather of my JTs. I lifted it to my mouth, but to my horror and amazement the little bag came with it! My other hand was occupied with the throttle so I tried shaking it off but the bag was so light it held fast to my hand. The starter was inching back toward the safety of the fence getting ready to signal the start. I had to think fast. My hand was in a veritable monkey trap. To hold on to the donut meant having my hand trapped in the bag, but to let go meant losing the precious cargo inside. The starter turned the sign sideways and the gate trembled. I cried in anguish, "I can't let go of this donut! I'm going for it!"

Bag, donut and all I reached for the clutch and felt the cake crumble and the jelly ooze between my fingers as the gate dropped and I was away. Up the starting hill I held it wide-open, speed-shifting through the gears and trying to shake off the damn bag. Into the first turn I pitched it sideways, squashing the donut against the hand grip, squirting some jelly up my sleeve. Good heavens! I had the holeshot! Down Blitzkrieg Hill I clicked it into fourth and tried to pull the bag off with my teeth. It was no use. Every time I lifted my hand to my face, I'd hit a big bump and end up punching myself in the forehead.

Things were getting hairy. I could hear the sounds of a half-dozen bikes behind me swapping lines trying to get by. The bag was still tightly wrapped around my hand and the donut inside was slowly turning into jelly pudding. Around Schizophrenia Turn I was in a full-lock slide and another guy cut inside me. Over the Himalaya Hoops we battled handlebar to handlebar. Feeling his elbow in my ribs, I pushed him with my bagged hand. Suddenly I was free! The paper had caught on his belt buckle and torn

itself from my hand. With renewed determination I gassed it and pulled away from my adversary. Then, on a smooth straight just before the pits, I noticed that all over my hand and halfway up my arm was that delicious, delectable Winchell's jelly donut.

Catching gears up Monster Mountain I shoved the pasty lump that was left in my hand into my mouth. Mmmmmmm boy! Was that good! Making the turn at the top, I wheelied down the other side licking the jelly off each and every finger. Tasted a little like an old shoe, but to a junk food junkie, anything was better than nothing. Diving nose-first off Ludicrous Leap, I finished nibbling the morsels up to my elbow. Aaaaahhhhh. That sure hit the spot.

A lap later I started coming on to the donut. First the flutters, then the tingles, then the sparkles and finally the sirens inside my head. The half-way flag came out and I was still in the lead. Suddenly the terrain ahead started waving and rolling like an ocean. Strange shapes loomed out at me and I was hearing voices. Holy Oreo, Batman, I was hallucinating!

Before my eyes the mudholes turned into bowls of chocolate pudding, the haybales into Snickers candybars and the old tires into birthday cakes. I was in junk food heaven. No longer was the race of any concern to me as goodie after goodie sped into view. Faster and faster I went, my eyes growing bigger and bigger at each new delight. Then came the most incredible sight of all. There before me, not more than ten feet on the other side of the fence, stood the biggest chocolate eclair I had ever seen in all my days of junk foodery. Standing taller than a man, this humongous cream puff overpowered even my strongest instincts of self-preservation. Flat-out in fifth I pitched my screaming bike over a berm, clearing the fence with 20 feet to spare. Soaring through the air, I clicked it sideways in a perfect cross-up, flashing a sticky peace sign with my jelly donut hand, and dove into that big, beautiful dessert.

Well, the eclair turned out to be a port-a-can and that ended my ride for the day. But I learned one thing from the experience: Next time I'm going to get a blueberry donut and use a bigger bag.

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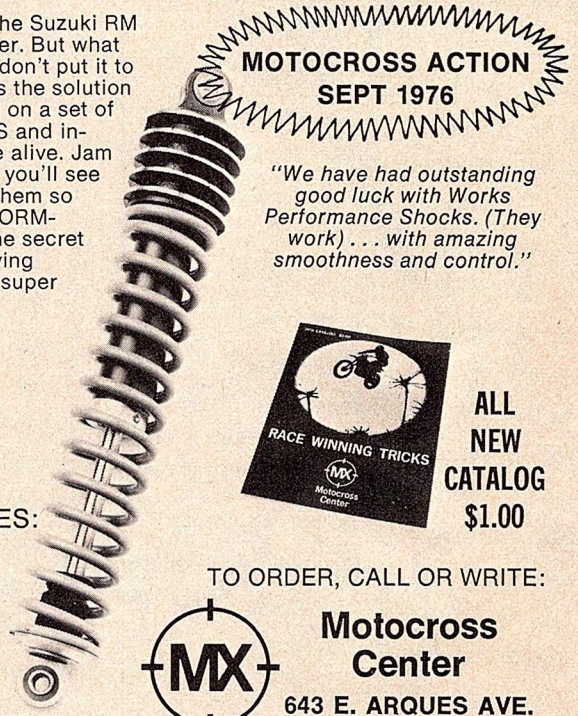

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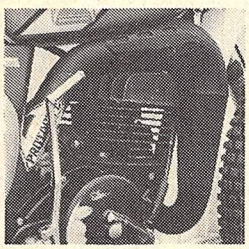

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mail entries

MAICO AW400 HATE MAIL

Dear MXA:

I can never see what you magazine guys find so consistently wonderful about Maicos. They're heavy, slow and break all the time. You know as well as I do that all the pros are switching to Suzukis. Wise up.

Marty Breene
Garden City, Kansas

Dear MXA:

I have had the pleasure of owning the new AW400 for several weeks now and I must agree with you that it is The Bike. The fork problem can be solved just as you say it can be, and once the carb is leaned out a little, it runs perfectly. It's the best bike.

Bill Swensen
Palmdale, California

Dear MXA:

I don't care how great the AW400 Maico is. I just want to know how test rider Pete Maly does those bitchen peace sign wheelies.

Michael Hillard
Greenville, South Carolina

(*Very carefully.*)

Dear MXA:

You nerdnicks wouldn't own a Maico because you're too dumb or lazy to work on one. Besides, once you get them dialed, they run forever. Take that, you turkeys.

The Maico Kid
Buffalo, New York

Dear MXA:

I get really tired of reading and hearing about how unreliable and expensive to maintain the Maico is. I raced Japanese MX bikes for almost three years and had my share of the mechanical failures common to their machinery. A friend of mine talked me into buying a used Maico 250 five-speed in the fall of '75 and I can only tell you that no motorcycle could possibly have given me better service. I have been racing an AW250 for about three months and my new bike seems to be just as reliable. I'm sure that there are some people with some expensive stories to tell about their Maico, but I have over 50 races on them and I'm still looking for my first DNF.

Kenny Hill
Waco, Texas

Dear MXA:

I wish to know why you must continue to insult those of us of German nationality? Your insensitive mockery of Adolf Weil's accent has no place in an American magazine.

Herbert Von Hassen
San Francisco, California

(*We never got over the war, Herbie.*)

MOTOCROSS MAX

Dear MXA:

Motocross Max was outstanding. He looks like a real dummy but his girlfriend is kinda foxy. How did she get that "Gorilla Snot" all over her body?

Peter Grimshaw
Buckeye, Arizona

(*She had help.*)

Dear MXA:

Where did you ever get the name "Motocross Max?"

Debbie Barnnett
Hartford, Connecticut

(*Max is MXA spelled inside out.*)

Dear MXA:

How come in the Unadilla results you have Mickey Boone riding for S and M Cycle Sales in the first moto and Team Honda in the second?

Jim Mores
Stateboro, Georgia

(*Our sissy art director couldn't see through his false eyelashes and missed the mistake.*)

TRANS-AMA COVERAGE

Dear MXA:

Those mud scenes from the Trans-AMA were incredible. How do those guys get through all that goop?

Fred Linden
St. Louis, Missouri

(*Raincoats and overshoes is the only way to go.*)

EUROPEAN COVERAGE

Dear MXA:

I read the MXA coverage of the Grand Prix of Finland. Because I am a Finn, I noticed there were photos from the GP of Sweden under the same title. Have you had some kind of mistake? I hope you understand because writing in English is not so easy for me as it is for you.

Rauno Hanninen
Jyska, Finland

(*You think it's so easy for us?*)

CORRECTION ON QUAFFING

Dear MXA:

I noticed in the Sept. '76 issue of MXA a photograph of your own Don McGoggle Esq. quaffing a can of our most evil local brew.

This in itself was not so bad, apart from the fact that McG. seems

Continued on page 63

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Circle 5 on page 73

"CAN YOU GIVE US TEN TERRIFIC REASONS TO RIDE ON FOX SHOCKS?"

ANSWER:

1. KENT HOWERTON 2. BRAD LACKEY
3. STEVE WISE 4. MIKE RUNYARD
5. PAT RICHTER 6. CREG ROBERTSON
7. MICKEY BOONE 8. MARTY MOATES
9. GARY CHAPLIN 10. CHUCK SUN

To stay on top in competition, professionals need and depend on professionally designed and manufactured equipment.

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Try our revolutionary new FOX SHOX with DUAL RATE FOX SPRINGS and REMOTE RESERVOIRS, or the unique FOX AIRSHOX, the greatest dual-pressure shock ever produced, and find out what it feels like to be on top.

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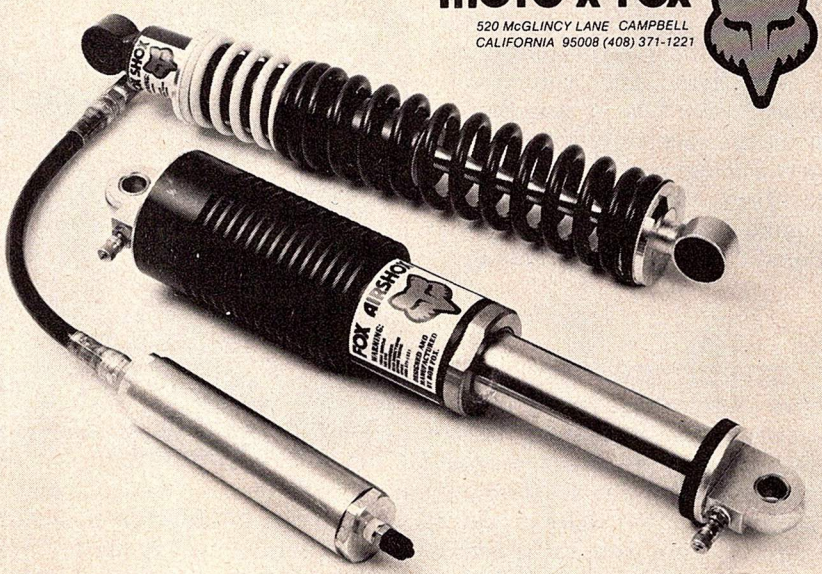


Circle 6 on page 73

dirt

by holbert holquist

TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY

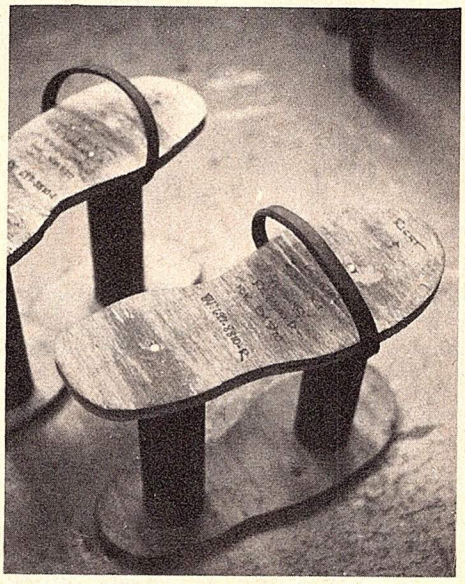
Since the beginning of motocross history riders have been switching factories at the end of the year, but for the first time mechanics got in on the transfer syndrome. Tony DiStefano's former mechanic Keith McCarty left Team Suzuki to become Bob Hannah's mechanic at Yamaha. Bob Hannah's mechanic, Bill Buchka, left Yamaha to go to Europe to work for Hallman-Eneqvist. A week later Team Suzuki teenager Jeff Jennings's mechanic, Larry Carpenter, left to join McCarty at Yamaha. Carpenter will be Rick Burgett's mechanic. Burgett's former mechanic, Don Dudek, decided to retire from active merrymaking. Jeff Jennings's new mechanic at Suzuki will be his father. Tony DiStefano will have Alan Hahn as his mechanic in 1977. Hahn was Danny LaPorte's mechanic last year. LaPorte will get Gary Chaplin's old mechanic, Pat Alexander. Pierre Karsmakers has switched to Yamaha to ride the Super Series and the Grands Prix and he took Broc Glover's mechanic, Ed Scheidler. Are you totally confused? Broc Glover was the last man on the mechanic rotation and he gets a ghost out of the past, Jim Felts. Felts was Jimmy Weinert's mechanic back when Weinert was National Champion at Kawasaki.

* * * *

TIPS OF THE SHORTS

After an exhaustive study of underwear that had many of our friends wondering what was going on, the MXA crew has put the stamp of approval on two styles of dainty semi-protective unmentionables. Number one on the panty parade is Tony DiStefano's silk bikini briefs and second is Jody Weisel's red satin "Hurricane" Carter replica boxing trunks. If you are wondering what the hot tip is in the shiny undergarments, the answer is that they keep your leathers from chafing, but at the same time allow them to slip and slide as you move.

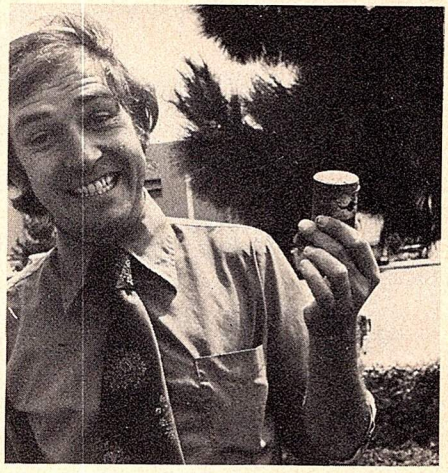
* * * *



LONG TRAVEL SUSPENSION PROBLEMS? Try these footwear accessories we found lying around the Works Performance shop. They work well in heavy rainstorms, also.

MAN MAKES GOOD

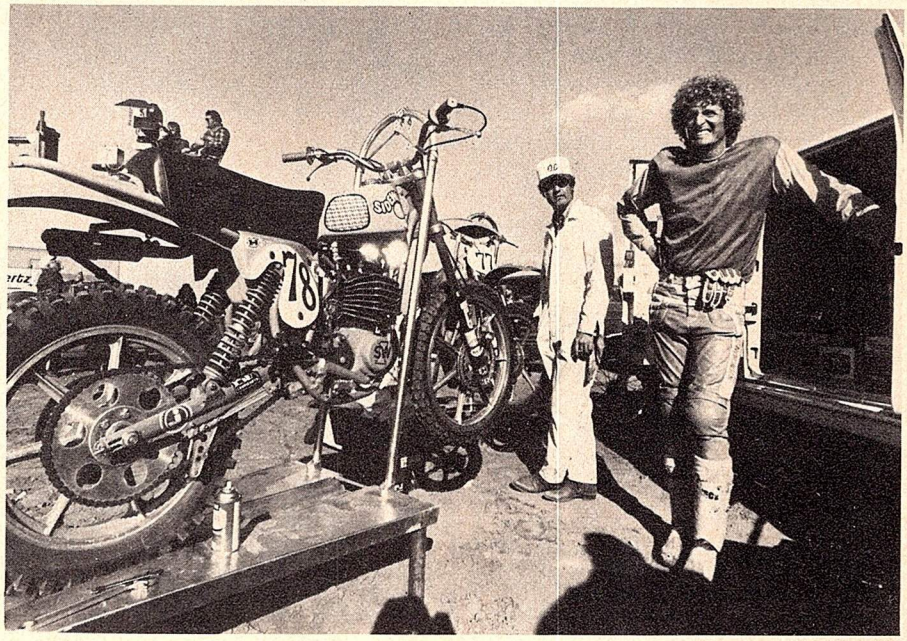
Jeff Burtt, who reached the pinnacle of success a few months ago by being named a MOTOCROSS ACTION Whip, has now achieved another plateau almost as prestigious. Jeff has been named the Public Relations Manager for U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation. In his hands rest the good name and image of Suzuki. He asked us to request that everybody reading this say something good about an RM today. One thing for sure, Jeff Burtt is something good about Suzuki.



Suzuki's Jeff Burtt.

* * * *

TINSELTOWN TALK



There is a new movie in production in Hollywood that is all about motocross. It stars Michael "Then Came Bronson" Parks and former child evangelist Marjoe Gortner. Titled Sidewinder II, which is the name of the motorcycle they ride, it is all about life and love on the National circuit. The futuristic Sidewinder MXers look amazingly similar to Adolf Weil's Maico.

WHIPS . . .
THE BROTHERS BIGELOW

Perhaps you have seen those flashy Team Dynamic jerseys in one of the local MX papers or at the track. Stuffed inside those shirts are four racing brothers, Kirk, Kris, Kip and Kreg Bigelow. Racing for Dynamic Cycles out of Troy, Michigan, the Yamaha-mounted Bigelow boys have amassed an impressive record.

Kirk is the Michigan State 250 Champion. Kris was 1974 Junior State Champion and ended up second 125 Expert in the AMA Central region in 1976. Kip was an AMA National mini champ in 1975 and was second 125 Junior in his District in 1976. Kreg has taken over the mini chores and finished third in his District this year.

Motocross is a family sport and rarely is that displayed so graphically as in Team Dynamic's Bigelow brothers. There are several brother acts in the pro ranks of motocross now with the Tripes, Eierstedts, Gillmans and Hales, but in a couple of years the four Bigelows could be setting the world on fire.

* * * *

SHOCKING NEWS

After an on-again off-again decision-making process Marty Smith has announced that he will not try to regain his 125cc National Championship from Bob Hannah, nor will he go back to Europe this year to race Grands Prix. Marty's departure from the 125 ranks will leave young Warren Reid as Honda's only 125 factory rider. Reid's father, John R. Rosenstiel, will be his mechanic. John R. has been Marty

See next page

Looks Like A Winner.
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THE EXCLUSIVE NEW
7075 Solid Aluminum
TRANS-AM BARS BY "BarFly"™

Just introduced, the new 7075 bars by BarFly look like winners with their six-color range of non-chip, peel proof anodized colors keyed to popular bikes. And they perform like winners with the light weight feel and fatigue-absorbing flex of their aircraft aluminum construction. Now, it's official. THEY ARE WINNERS. Adopted by several top competitors, they've already started to compile a record of firsts and seconds in major races. Check out the new 7075. Pick your color and style from the 11 bends and sizes, and ride with the hottest new winner in custom bars.

OTHER BARFLY BARS You may prefer the extra fatigue-free flexing of the tubular aluminum BarFly Motocross Bars. Same six-color range, same 11 bends and sizes, same aircraft aluminum. BarFly also manufactures superior chromed steel Touring Bars in the five most popular styles.

GENEX TOOL & DIE, INC.
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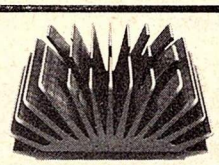
Write For Literature, Complete Details



Cool it with a FAN-DANCER
A totally new concept in aluminum radial finned heads. Ask for literature.

Circle 7 on page 73

dirt

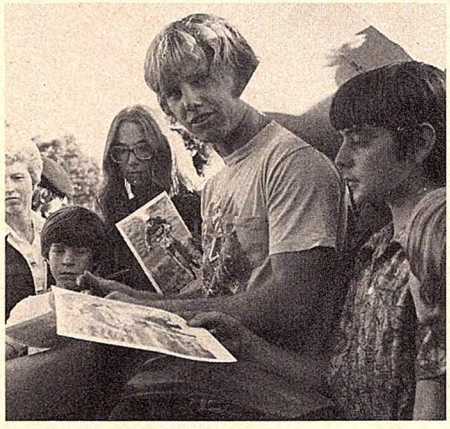
Continued

Smith's GP mechanic in Europe. Don't despair! Smith is not quitting, he is moving up to the 250 and 500 classes.

* * * *

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

Brad Lackey will probably have to undergo the knife to repair a hernia that was discovered living somewhere in his leathers after the Trans-AMA. Brad's doctors are still arguing the point, but either way it is going to set back Bad Brad's preparation for the GP season in Europe. With Brad Lackey and Jim Pomeroy joining Team Honda things were getting a little crowded in the Team truck. Rich Eierstedt became the man on the hot seat when he was



Bultaco's Rich Eierstedt.

unable to come to terms with Honda. When word leaked out that Eierstedt might be leaving Honda, several manufacturers approached the Norwalk, California, rider with offers. At this time it appears that Rich Eierstedt will be joining Wayne Boyer and Kenny Zahrt at Team Bultaco.

* * * *

TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN

The AMA pay-off at the end of a National Championship is a very generous event. Riders who finish in the top 20 in the first moto are paid, the top 20 in the second moto are paid and the top 20 overall based on points are paid. Theoretically a rider can finish 23rd in the first moto and 30th in the second moto and still get paid for making the top 20 overall, or a rider can win the first moto and DNF the second moto and still take home some bucks. The question at hand is, since the championship points are paid only for the motos, which are considered separate races, then why is the largest portion of the money paid to the mythical overall winner?

* * * *

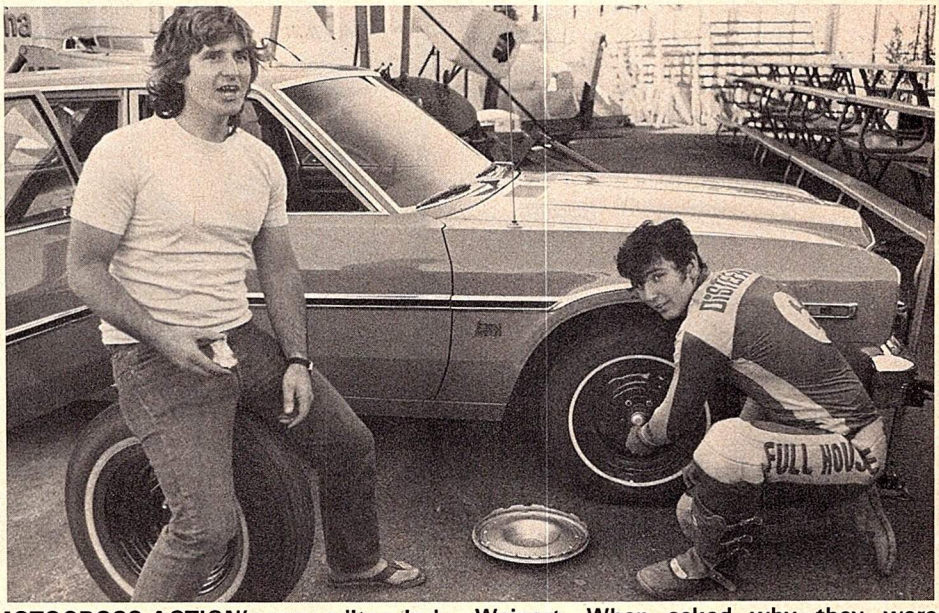
SPARE TIME

What does a two-time 125 National Champion like Marty Smith do in his spare time? Marty has just made two recent acquisitions to his toy box. Marty bought a new, tricked-out four-stroke (which he used in the four-stroke championships) and a dune buggy.

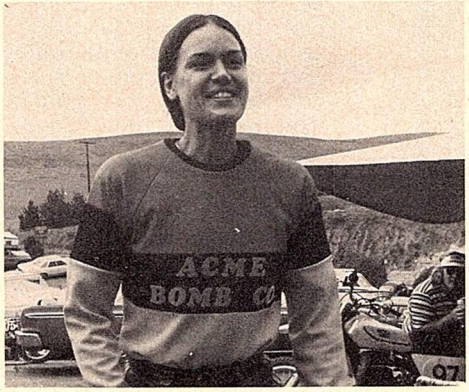
ONE MILLION LIABILITY SUITS IN 1976

According to an analysis by a conference of large insurance agents held in New York, the number of people suing companies for allegedly defective products is rising rapidly and along with it, the cost of product liability insurance. The amount spent on liability coverage for non-auto-related accidents increased from $2 billion in 1970 to $3 billion in 1974 and it is estimated that one million product liability suits have been filed in 1976.

A spokesman for Bell Helmets, a company deeply concerned with the cost of product liability insurance, stated that many helmet manufacturers and other small companies producing motorcycle accessories have been driven out of business by the astronomical price of liability coverage.



MOTOCROSS ACTION's new editor Jody Weisel and his auto mechanic Tony DiStefano casually pose for the probing eye of photographer Jammin' Jimmy Weinert. When asked why they were changing a tire that wasn't flat, Jody replied that, "Tony and I are in training for the ISDT."

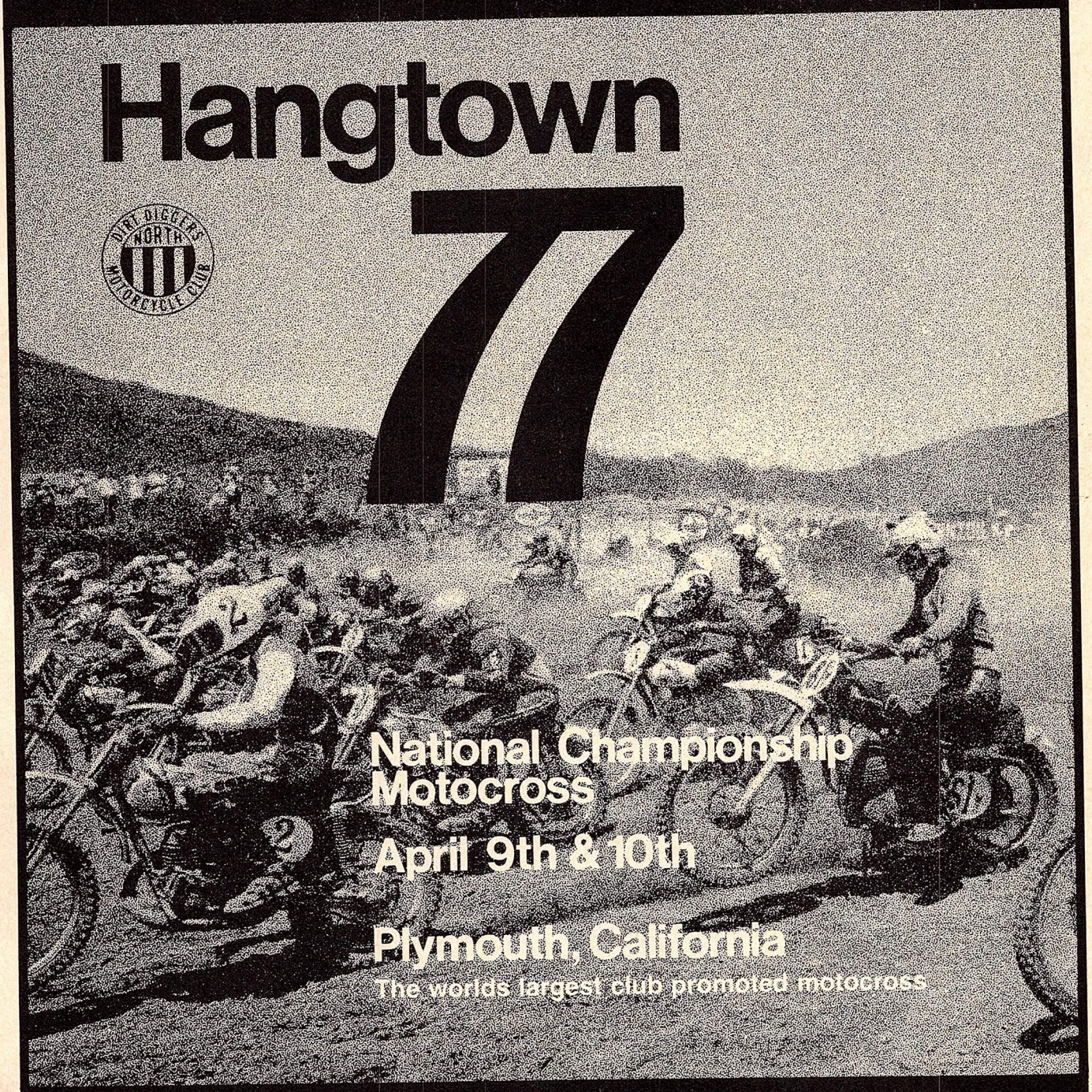


LADY RACER Laura Maddock of Hemet, California, shows off the colors of her new sponsor. Team captain is Wiley Coyote.

This may well be the new production KX250. Terry Clark rode this machine at Anaheim Stadium, and based on the quality finish on the forks and frame this pre-production proto is nearing its marketing stage. It won the Consolation moto.

dirt diggers north m.c.
ninth annual motocross

Hangtown 77



National Championship Motocross

April 9th & 10th

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for details

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AMA

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Sorry No Camping

wing nut

by al baker

These letters are real and so are the answers and opinions expressed by Baker, which incidentally are subject to change at any time or in the near future. (ed.)

FACTORY WRENCH

I personally feel my brother would make a great factory race mechanic. If you saw his bike and the work he does, you would too. There's nothing super-trick or flashy about it, it's just so well set up it's unbelievable. He conducts himself like a pro and I feel he should be one. I would like to know, for his sake, how to become a wrench for the stars and what the factory mechanics have to do besides just maintaining the racing machines.

Tim Campbell
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Believe me, it's no cakewalk working as a factory wrench. At one time or another I have wrenched for guys like Bad Brad Lackey, Jammer Jimmy Windout, John Destroyer De Soto and "PP" Lamppu the FFF boy, along with mechanics like Commander Jim Felt, Steve Johnson and Paul Upland (Bad Bob). We completely built brand-new motorcycles weekly out of the "junk" the wrecking crew left us on Sunday. As I look back, it was probably the hardest job I've ever had, but was possibly the most rewarding. I'm still undecided. Not only does a factory wrench totally disassemble his racing machine weekly to clean it and inspect for flaws, but completely rebuilds the motor. For frosting he'll probably have to drive from Houston to Orlando. If he's really lucky he'll have to drive from Seattle to New York. Besides the wrenching and long hours spent driving, you've got to put up with road hazards such as tire blowouts at 95 mph, Okie police officers and their radar toys, narrow roads when driving tall trucks, the food in Ohio and the ladies in Georgia. Take it from one who found out the hard way: Factory wrenching ain't for boys. If you really feel your brother could stay away from home at least 40 weeks a year and work 18 hours a day and qualify as one of the top wrenches in the country, then I would highly suggest that he make up a resume of himself today.

I would send it and his intentions to all of the motocross factory racing managers I'm listing below.

Ken Clark, Yamaha International, Buena Park, California

Terry Mulligan, American Honda, 100 W. Alondra, Gardena, California

Tim Smith, Kawasaki Motor Corp, 2009 E. Edinger, Santa Ana, California

Toch Koyama, U.S. Suzuki, 13767 Freeway Dr., Santa Fe Springs, California

Dean Goldsmith, Husqvarna Motorcycles, Inc., 4935 Mercury St., San Diego, California

Ted Lapidakis, KTM Imports, Mason Ave., Chatsworth, California

Steve Stasiefski, Maico West, 110 E. Santa Anita Ave., Burbank, California

'74 HUSKY VERSUS '76

My '74 Husky reed valve motor just ate the big one, and I would like to know if '76 GP parts will fit in the cases, or should I just use new '74 parts? I need everything from the crank on up. Guess it didn't like lying on its side WFO for three minutes. Would appreciate the info — great mag.

Brad Houze
San Diego, California

I did some checking with the Husky factory racing coordinator, Dean Goldsmith. Your misfortune doesn't look so bad after all. Probably because you're going to have a bunch faster bike in the end. Your crank assembly is rebuildable. The rod kit from a Husky dealer should run about $40. Labor charges for rebuilding it shouldn't run over $20. '74 and '76 cylinder heads are the same inside, so stick with '74. The '76 GP cylinders will bolt right on your '74 cases and run about $135. All you'll need to make it go is the '76 piston, which is in the vicinity of $35. Your '74 pipe will work with the '76 top end, although the '76 looks a lot tricker.

YOU AIN'T NOTHING

I decided to send you guys a line and take up just a little bit of your time. Any reply you can give me will be extremely helpful. This letter has much to do with my future.

I am just a 17-year-old 125 amateur rider who is sick and tired of simply circulating around the track every Sunday. You could say I have turned over a new leaf in my life.

At the moment, I am involved in running two miles a day, and doing the Tibblin exercises regularly. I'm in the process of purchasing a new 1977 RM125 to go out and prove a few things to myself and to my friends. The way I see it, I feel very strongly that I am capable of becoming a top-notch professional someday. So far there are no results to justify this, but this upcoming season I'm gonna try like crazy to change that.

I dream all the time of someday becoming a champion. I feel that I've got what it takes on the inside, all I have to do now is prove it. Do you think I'm just a silly kid with a dream, or do you feel I should get out there and go for it?

My racing career has only been going on for about a year now, but I feel that with time I can learn to jam with the best. I don't have a sponsorship, except for my folks. When I do a simple thing like wear out a spark plug, I almost have to hold my breath hoping that I'll find the money somewhere to buy a new one.

Now that's low-bucks racing!

In all seriousness, should I gas it up or lay back in a rockin' chair and take up needlepoint?

Steve F. Shields
Keeling, Virginia

As my good buddy Brad Lackey would say, "You ain't nothing," meaning if you think you're so hot with the pressure you've got now, you have no idea what a real pro is up against. You may read about what the pros do and see them race, but doing it is another story. A serious pro usually starts his career at about your age. He doesn't just circulate around the track every Sunday, but gasses it up during the week also. Every lap is a new lap as he'll try to go into corners harder and over jumps faster.

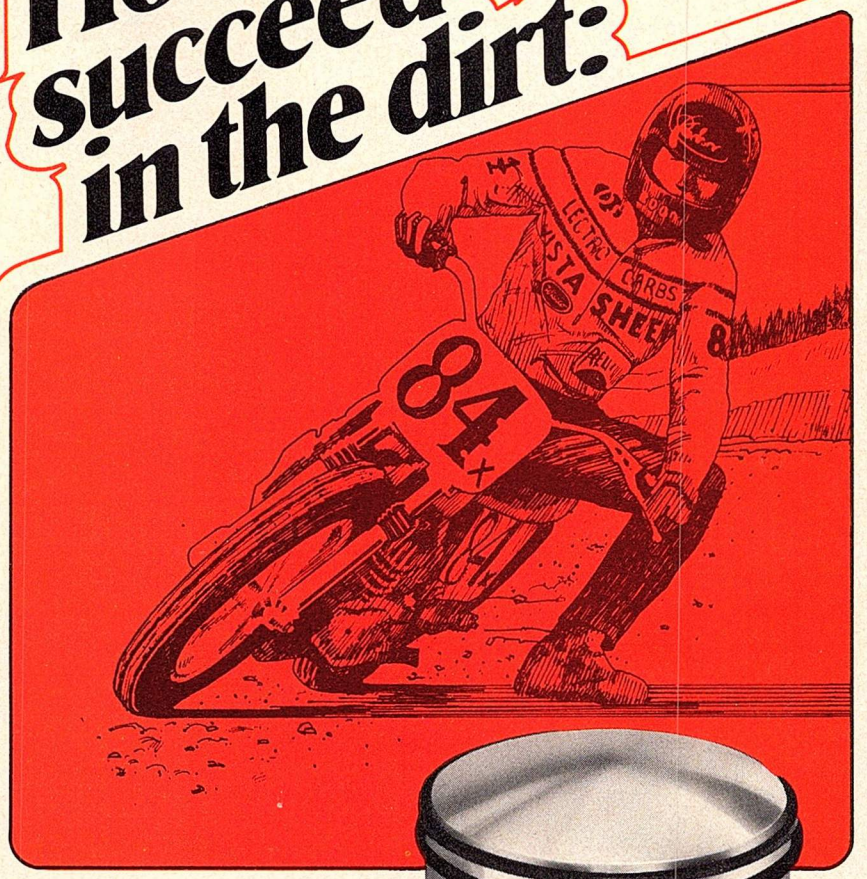
He'll have new techniques and new lines each lap. Pushing harder and harder each lap will result in a stronger, smoother and more confident rider. Once you are physically in shape, you must prepare yourself mentally. You are better than your competition so there's no excuse for second place. You must seek out your competition, not with your mouth, but with the expertise and class of handling yourself on and off the track. If you're starting the season with the new equipment you mentioned, what are you doing in the amateur class? If you're going for it, gas all the way. Race with the experts and ride to win. Stay strong, smooth and consistent, plus always keep one move ahead of your competition, and you'll become the champ you really want to be or "you ain't nothing."

250 BEGINNER?

I'm nearly 16 and am planning to enter my first motocross race next spring. My problem is this: I own a '75 Husqvarna 250 CR. I bought it used this past summer and it's in great shape. I'm in good physical condition and work with my bike nearly every day. I'm 150 pounds and don't have much trouble racing the motorcycle around my practice track, which is not only rough but tight. I don't presently have ample funds to buy a new 125 racer. So, should I race my 250? I know that you're supposed to go for the first times with a smaller bike to learn MX well. Would it be possible to

Continued on page 66

How to succeed in the dirt:



Switch to the Wiseco FMX. Forged for racing!

It's the strongest, lightest piston available . . . engineered to give you more power!

True! Wiseco FMX forged pistons, combined with SuperStrength rings, give you more power. The rings fight power's worst enemies — heat and friction. You get the most efficient performance possible; FMX piston construction means minimum expansion, greater piston skirt control, best combustion chamber heat transfer to the cylinder walls. The SuperStrength rings have outstanding sealing capabilities; they fight power's worst enemies — heat and friction. Know some of the winners who depend on the Wiseco FMX? Ted Boody, Daryl Hurst, Garth Brow, and Bart Markel — to name a few. How about you?

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7201 Industrial Park Boulevard
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The Switch Is On — to WISECO

Send for Latest Piston Brochure — FREE!

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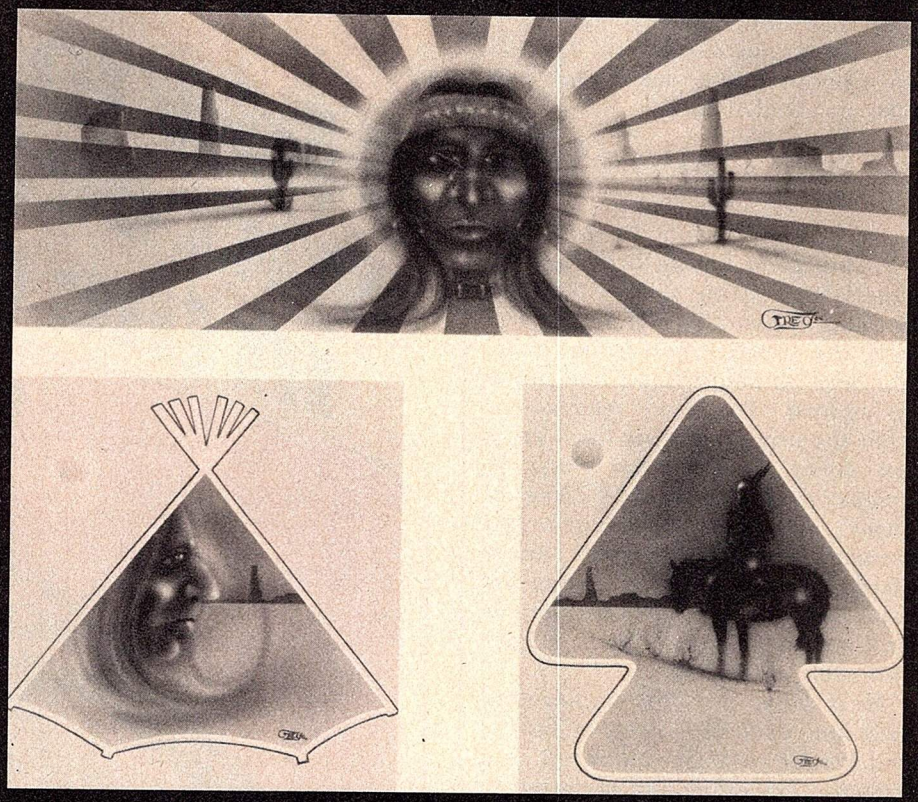
Circle 8 on page 73

tricks from the trade

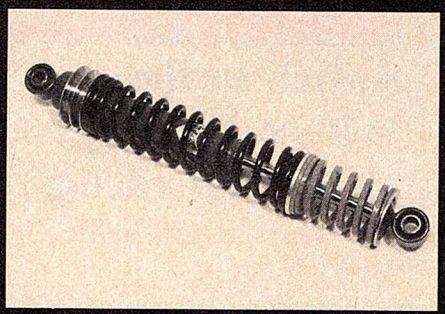


MARTY'S PANTS

Find out for yourself if he puts them on one leg at a time by purchasing a pair of Torsten Hallman Marty Smith Replica leathers. They weigh less than two and a half pounds. That in itself may be a speed secret. Each pair is signed by MS hisself. Write to Torsten Hallman Racing, Dept. MXA, 1490 Fayette Street, El Cajon, California 92020, and tell them you want to get into Marty's pants.

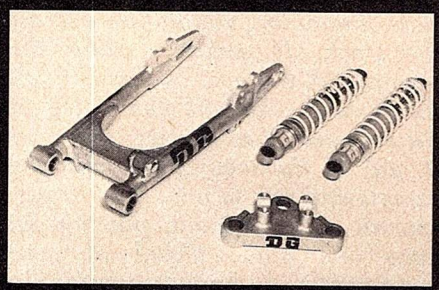
VAN MURALS

Trimbrite murals come in three-piece sets with the center panel measuring 18 inches by 49 inches. Along with this sentimental American Indian motif they also offer a set with two bikers lofting it across a sun-drenched landscape. We showed you the Indians to prove that we got culture, but your local auto accessory store can supply you with the motorcycle scene if you insist.



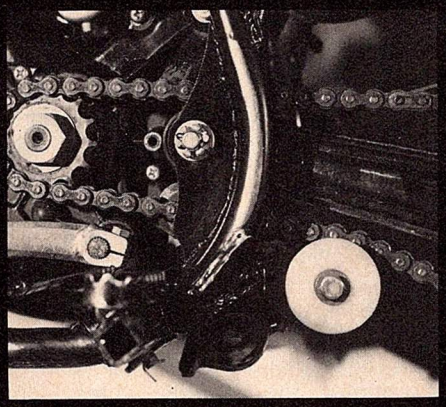
GIRLING GROWS

DG Performance Specialties opens up the world of Girling gas shocks to all of you elitists who want a shock at least as long as the Congressional Record. The new Girling gassers are available in 14-inch and 15-inch varieties for the ultimate in long travel suspension. You probably thought they wouldn't ever be able to get it up beyond 13.5 inches, but those English blokes went and fooled you. Shocks come complete with dual-rate springs and all the mounting hardware necessary to rig up an LTR to end LTRs. Write or call DG Performance Specialties, Dept. MXA, 5552 La Palma Ave., Anaheim, California 92806, Attention: Edith.



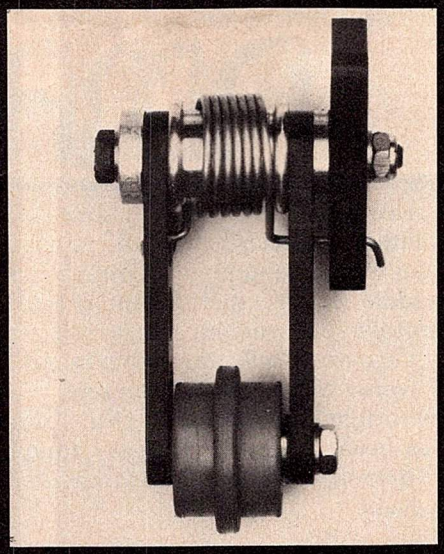
DG MINI MAGIC

DG Performance Specialties has decided to enter into the mini market with aluminum swingarms for the YZ, RM and XR. It weighs one and a half pounds less than stock. DG also has designed a new aluminum upper triple clamp to eliminate fork flex on the new RM80 and YZ80. $35.95 will keep your top crown as steady as a rock over the rocks. Boge MX shocks with Ken Ross springs are also being offered to help dial in the rear end. When used with the DG swingarm there will be over seven inches of rear wheel travel. The swingarm runs $109 and the shocks will set up at $72.95. Order yours from DG, Dept. MXA, 5552 La Palma, Anaheim, California 92806.



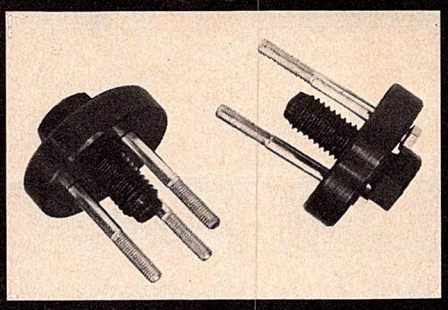
SKATEBOARD WHEEL

Tightening your chain all the time gets to be a real burn and keeps you from enjoying throbs and berms. Back in Pennsy they hate to adjust chains even more than we do and actually did something about it. RM Suzuki owners can bolt this chain tensor on without drilling a single hole (unless they forgot to in Japan). It is a must for long travel suspension and lazy people or both. Write to the Cycle Store, Dept. MXA, 1 Spring Garden, Lewistown, Pennsylvania 17044, and tell them how lazy you are or lie and tell them how long your travel is. Either way they will send you the full skinny.



PRO-AM TENSIONER

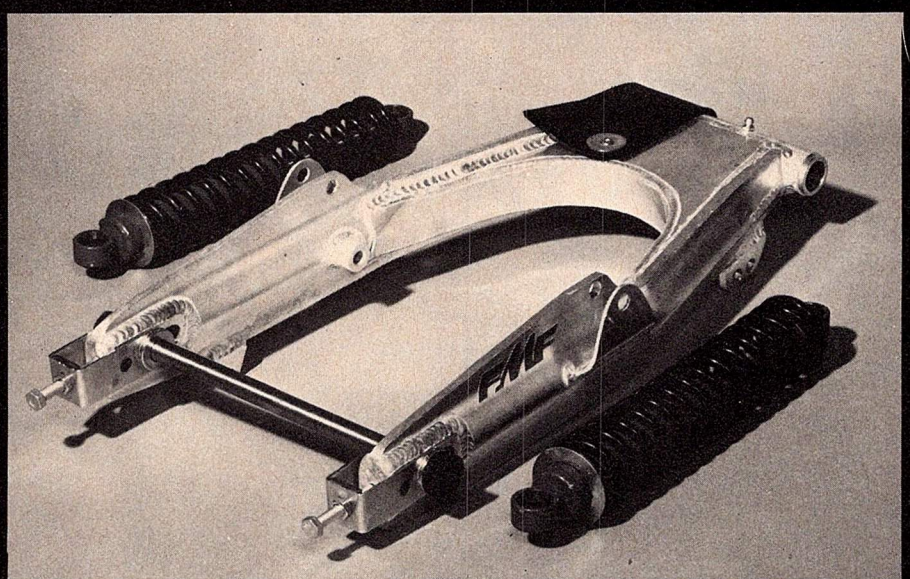
If your YZ80C, 100A or 125C Yamaha is pitching chains or if your buddy's RM125, 250 or 370 Suzuki almost decapitated you last week with flying links, keep reading. The Pro-Am chain tensioner is made from aluminum alloy plate and has sealed needle bearings and a urethane roller. Suggested retail price is $54 from Pro-Am, Dept. MXA, P.O. Box 2737, Palos Verdes, California 90274.



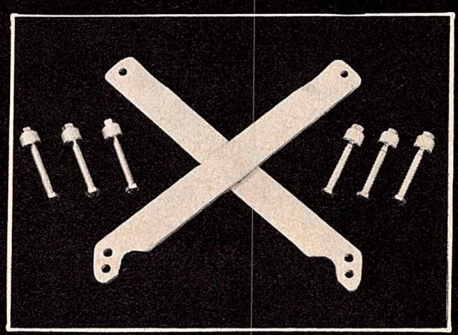
ZOOK FLYWHEEL PULLERS

Gadzooks! If it hasn't blown yet it probably will this Sunday, and then what are you going to do. The Baz, Jody and Dick take the cylinders off and use them as planters, but you'll probably want to tear it down and fix it. These precision-machined pullers are necessary for engine disassembly and are available from K&N. Pullers have a black oxide finish and each has its own confusing part number. For RM125s specify part No. T-108. It costs $5.95. For RM250/370s you only have to part with $4.95 for No. T-109. Send big bills to K&N Engineering, Inc., P.O. Box 1329, Dept. MXA, Riverside, California 92502.

COMPLETE ANGLER



If you haven't put anything on your CR125M2 in the last three days it is probably obsolete, but have no fear because Uncle Donny and the FMF race team of Steve Wise, Warren Reid and Radical Ron Turner have the answer. FMF spoon-feeds your Elsie like it was their own with a complete suspension kit including an aluminum Thor swingarm, chrome moly axle, chain adjusters, 13.4 Gas Girlings, your choice of spring rate and bronze bushings. $240.85 and you can drive it off the lot. Flying Machine Factory, Inc., 1416 West 259th Street, Harbor City, California 90710, or dial (213) 530-4656 and order a dozen of them. Tell them you saw it in MXA first.



PIRATE FLAG

Be the first on the block to fly this spiffy looking pirate flag over your Puch or buy the parts separately and brace your front triple clamps. This new brace eliminates front fork flex and stops twisting triple clamps. It will bolt on to your bike in minutes or can be done in hours if you don't follow the instructions. If your flexible parts won't get stiff then this is the hot setup, and it happens to be available for most Yamaha, Suzuki and Honda MX models. The price runs from $17.95 to $24.95 depending on the color of your stationery. Write to Big Dan, care of PDI, Dept. MXA, 1059 Cliff Road, Burnsville, Minnesota 55337, and do it on a brown paper bag. Enclose a dollar and a new PDI catalog will be returned to you as fast as the horse can run.

NMA MINI WI

Jeff Ward takes his fourth out of five in the Florida sun

By E.C. Birt

Everyone, at some time or another, has heard of the old saying, "Go west, young man." Toward the middle of November, for many mini motorcycle racers, that saying changes to "Go South, young racer." Covered wagons have been replaced by bright-colored vans. Old Paint has been replaced by highly tuned two-strokes and the deep rumble of valvers.

This was the fifth Florida Mini Cycle Winter National and the biggest so far. This year's Winter National turnout was almost unbelievable as more than 1000 entries and 5000 spectators traveled from all points of the United States. The racers' monumental journey brought them across mountains and plains to do three days of battle in the sun and sand of Florida.

competition

NTERNATIONALS

Three days of racing would get its kick-off with a hare scrambles, short-track, and wind up with motocross. Again this year, like last year, the total points that each rider earned from the hare scrambles, short-track and motocross would determine that honor of all honors: to be the overall winner of the Florida Winter Nationals.

Toward the end of the first day's hare scrambles competition, won by Jeff Ward, Mother Nature started to drop some of her pre-mix on the racetrack. As the rain trickled down, there was a buzz through the pits that if it started to rain very hard and came down all night, the short-track would have to be moved up to Sunday and the motocross part of the Nationals would be run on Saturday instead of Sunday. With this thought in mind, tired riders started working into the night to repair tired motocrossers that had been run in the hare scrambles. Luckily the rain held off, and Saturday morning found that the racing program was going to run as

Start of the 85cc class: Karl Jordan (84) of Fargo, Florida, turned his holeshot into an easy moto win in the 12-15 age bracket.

NMA MINI WINTERNATIONALS

scheduled and everyone had prepared their bikes a day early.

Sunday morning was warm and it was a perfect day for the windup of the Winter Nationals.

Freddie Van Wagoner from Seminole carries the Number 1 plate on his YZ80, and today he showed the rest of the field why he's the hottest thing going in the Junior Mini class. Van Wagoner had already chalked up a win in the Junior hare scrambles, and going into the first moto of his class, 85cc (7-11), Freddie knew that his chances of pulling off the overall would be good if he could put together a win. Van Wagoner became the proud owner of the overall trophy for the 7-11 class by winning both motos of his class.

Last year's Winter National Champion, Jeff Ward, the youngest member of American Honda's team, had stretched a valve a bit longer than needed and had to scratch the 85cc class, dampening his overall chances. Ward showed the style of why and how he made this his fourth overall win in the five years the Winter Nationals have been run as he rocketed his Mini Elsie out of the starting gate and into the lead of the 105cc Senior class. Ward set the throttle at the WFO position and never backed off till the checkers

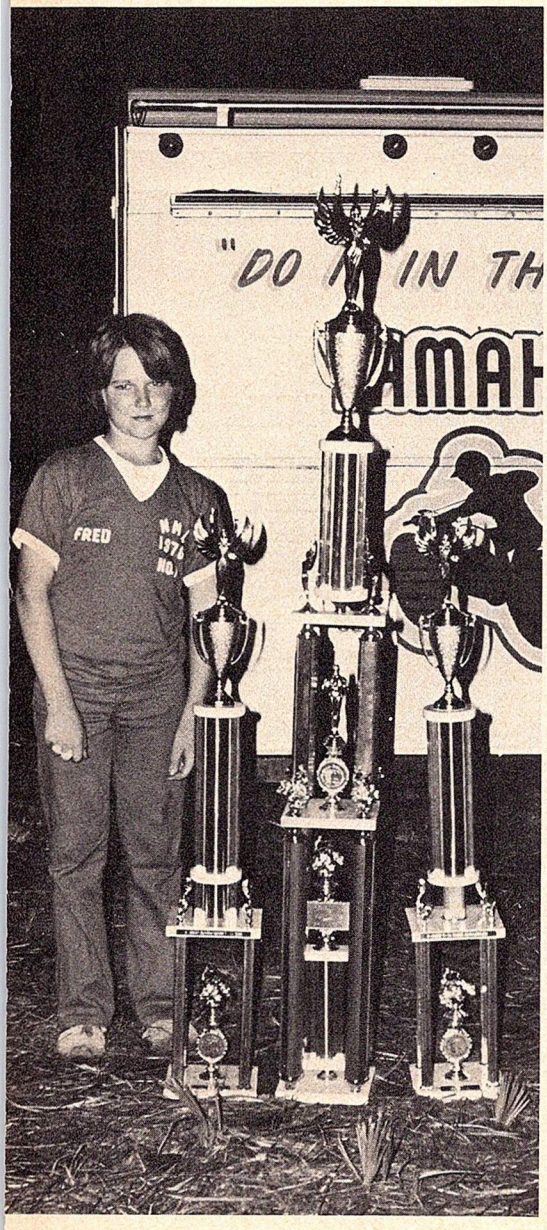
Overall winner in the 12-15 age group, Jeff Ward of Mission Viejo, California.

came out for two motos straight and the win for the day.

The sun had gone to California as they were passing out the trophies. Freddie Van Wagoner had come up with the overall win for the 7-11 age group. Jeff Ward was the overall winner for the 12-15 age group.

Back in the pits, vans were loading up for the long trip homeward. Old and newfound friends shake hands and, for the most part, there is only one more thing to say to each other, "See you next year."

Overall winner in the 7-11 age group, Freddie Van Wagoner of Seminole, Florida.



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Circle 9 on page 73

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Circle 10 on page 73

SUZUKI RM125B

As natural as A, B . . .

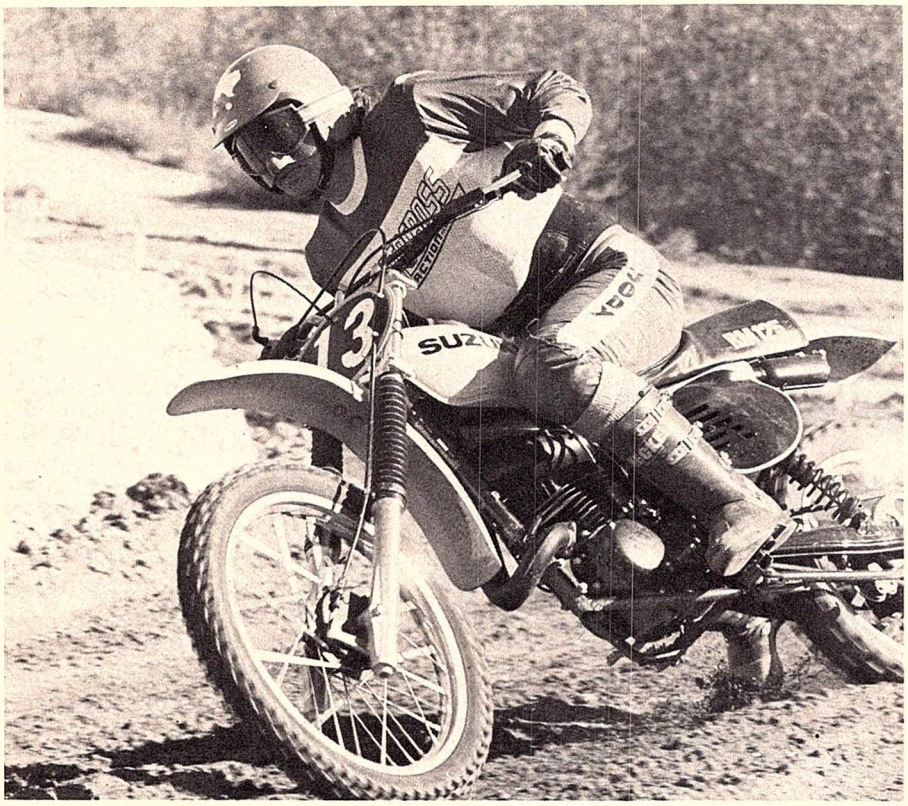
Wasn't a new RM125 just released a few months ago to replace the RM125 that was released a few months before that? The fact is that Suzuki Motor Corp. has engaged in one of the most comprehensive modification and updating programs in motorcycle manufacturing history. To introduce their newest 125 class package, the RM125B, Suzuki organized a big-bucks pro motocross invitational shootout between every major motorcycle publication. The MOTOCROSS ACTION team answered the call to combat as they have the past two years with another sound trouncing of the motocross teams of the "other" magazines. As bright as the MXA stars were, the brightest new performer on the scene was the new Suzuki RM125B.

Overall looks are deceiving. To the uninitiated eyeball it looks quite similar to the RM125A, but a closer look begins to reveal tasty little tidbits. The forks are long travel

Photos by Scott Heidbrink

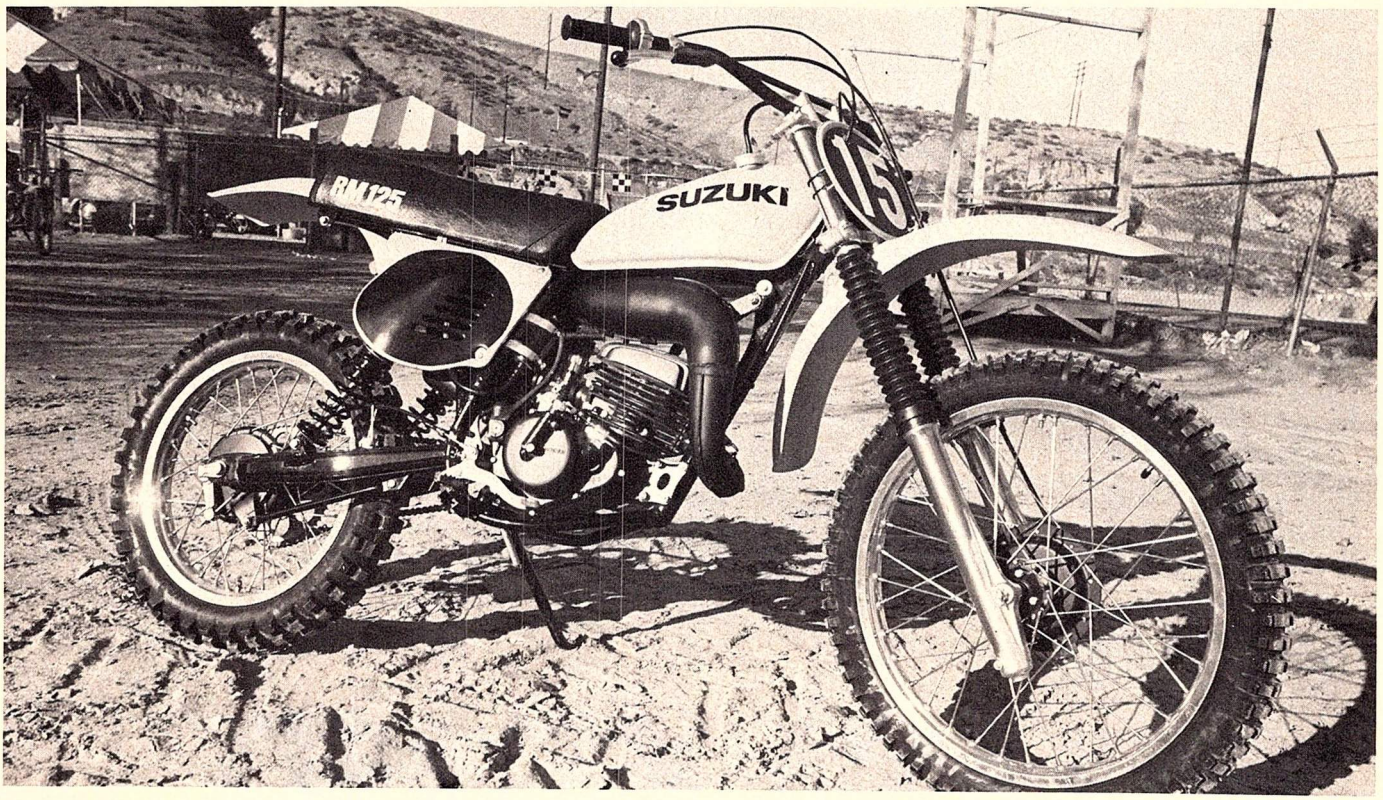
Victorious Team MXA vowed to go out and "Win one for the Cripper" as injured editor Dick Miller previewed his plaster leg. (Back row, left to right) Paul Boudreau, Jody Weisel, Dick Miller, Cherry Stockton, mechanic Alan Hahn; (Kneeling) Curt Evans, Pete Maly and Al Baker.

A bunch of mid-range and a completely redesigned suspension package put a smile on every test rider's face.

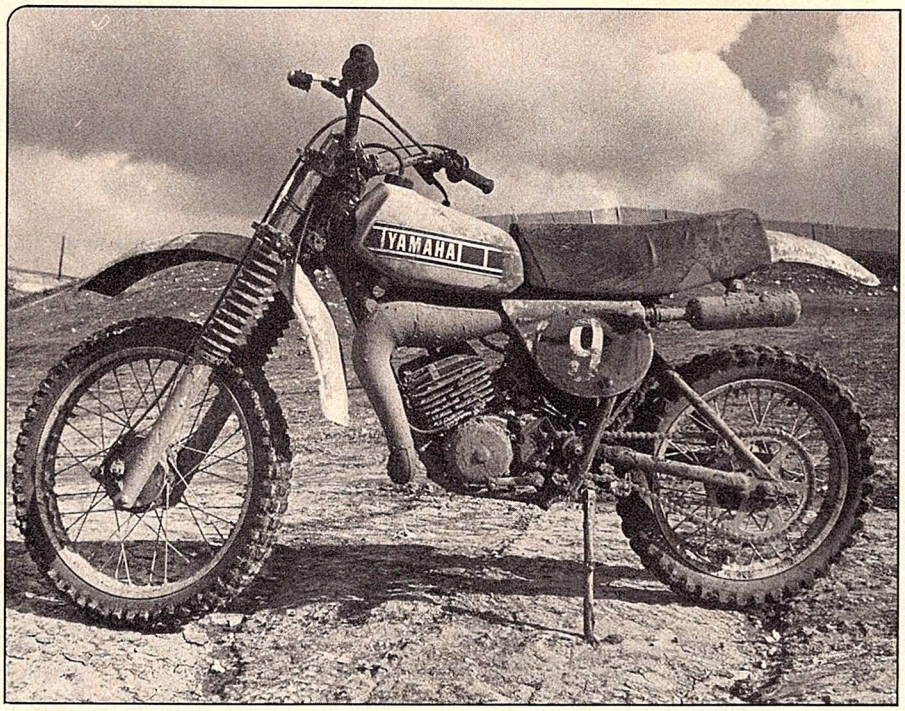


leading axle air/spring units connected to a totally new conical hub. A stab at the kickstarter unleashes a new, torquey motor with a large increase in mid-range power and an additional half a horse gain on top. Kayaba gas shocks with reservoirs grace the rear end along with a new chain tensioner and shock mounting position. A technical preview of all the changes and alterations will have to wait for the full test next month when MXA race-tests the RMB.

Bristling with subtle changes from silencer to spring rates; the most blatantly noticeable items are the black rubber booties on the fork legs.

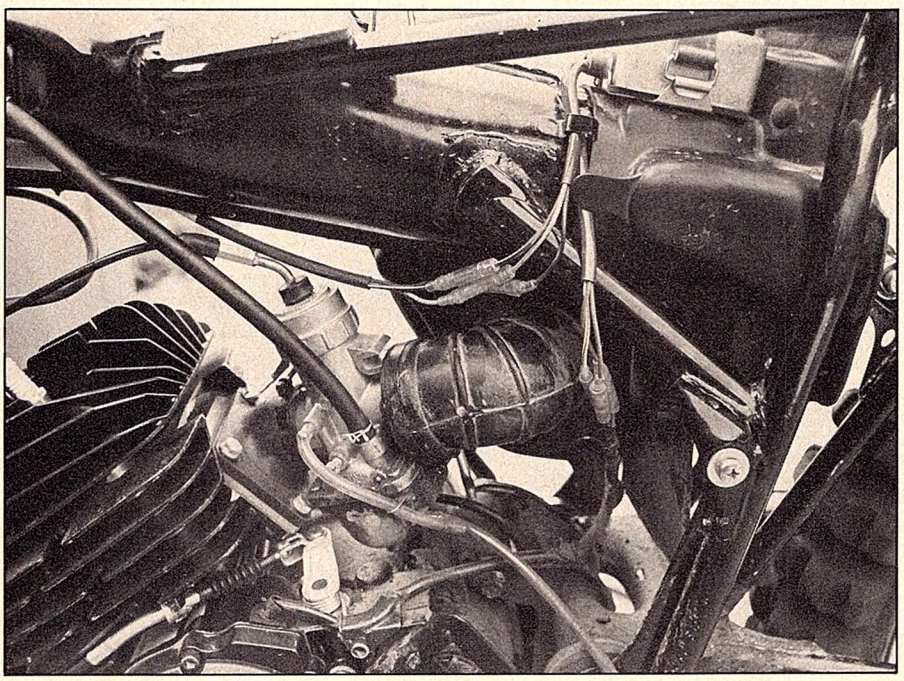


The RM125B is a highly successful package undergoing constant revision. It is a natural progression toward the objective. The objective is natural progression.



Yamaha has incorporated many of the designs found in their works bikes into the production models.

In order to use a single air box, the 32mm Mikuni is mounted at an angle.



Yamaha's new YZ125D is the perfect example.

The MX bikes being offered to the racing masses are mind-blowing. The trickery now arriving direct from the factories is nothing short of phenomenal. It's almost getting to the point where we couldn't ask for more. Never before have the stockers so closely resembled the works prototypes, both in appearance and performance. The term "out-of-the-crate racer" has finally become a reality.

The results are fantastic. The average, every-Sunday motocrosser is getting the best equipment he's ever ridden in his life right off the dealer's showroom floor. Power and suspension have reached the point of little or no necessary improvements, leaving the serious motocross competitor with nothing to do but personalize, dial, bulletproof, hop up and maintain his newly found professional racing weapon; then to enjoy the excellent results it delivers on whatever local hillsides he chooses to race on.

While we, the innocent motocrossers, simply stand back and reap the benefits, the rival factories are going WFO to produce the bikes that are being built with more thought, research and enthusiasm than ever before applied to motocross machinery. The good thing is that it's not really coming at any extra expense, just effort, on the factory's part. The Europeans continue to improve their proven designs, retaining their age-old traditions of building quality motorcycles for motocross competition, while the Japanese attack the problem in an entirely different fashion.

The Japanese factories are where the bucks are at. They produce thousands of bikes annually, making

race test

YAMAHA YZ125D

The monoshock finally comes totally of age — inexpensively

sure that each model fits a particular market. They are in the business to make money by offering products worthy of customer investment. Their factories are endless corridors of engineers and computers toiling day and night on problems involving the modern motorcycle. They have the latest technological information and manufacturing methods at their disposal.

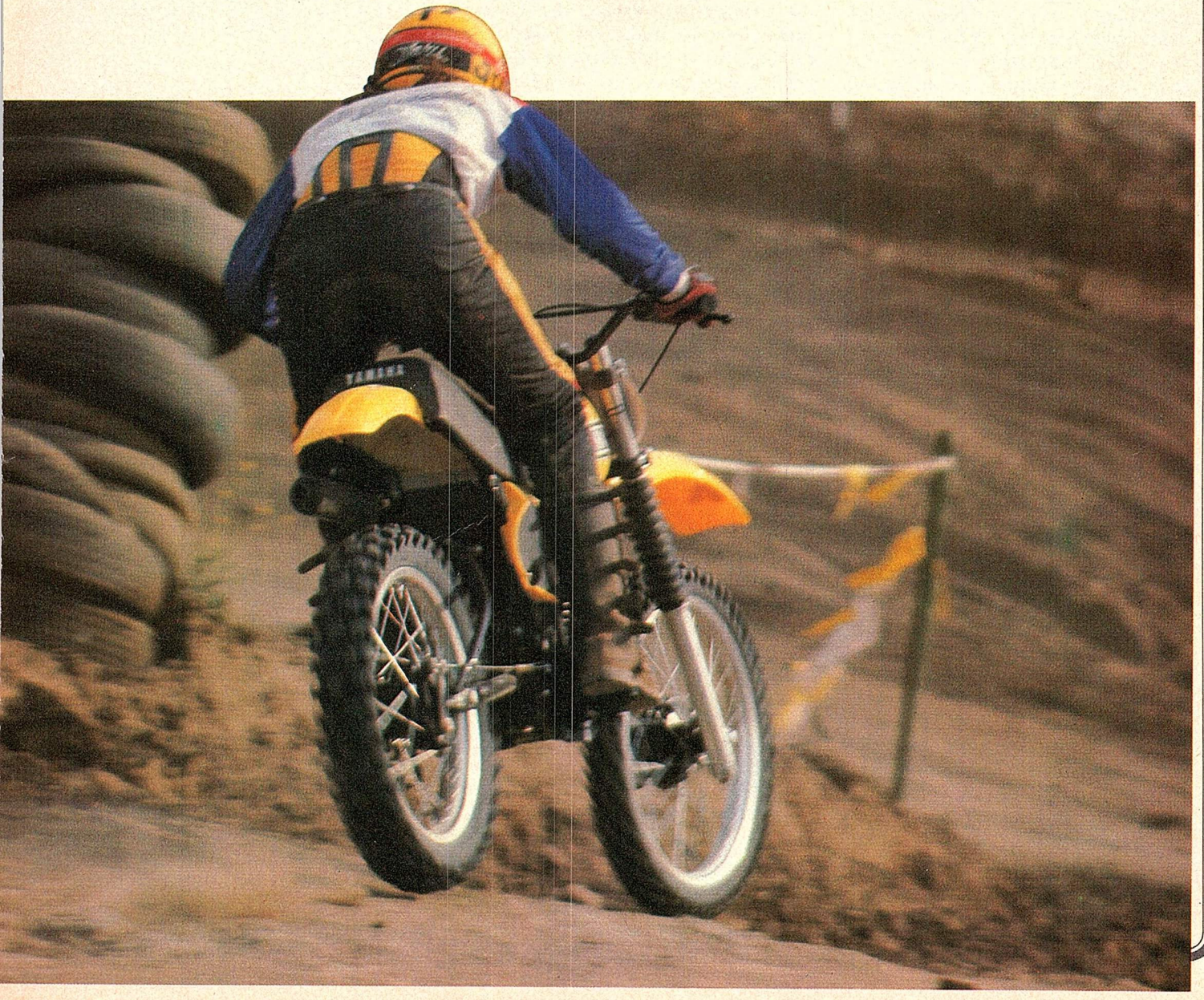
When it comes to motocross racing, the Japanese factories try to hog the show by hiring on the best riders by offering fat contracts. Sponsoring huge fleets of trucks, bikes and mechanics, the Japanese MX teams always seem to be putting on the biggest effort and are always drawing the biggest crowd around their beehive of activity in the pits. And their efforts have been rewarded because, finally, the Japanese companies have successfully merged their racing and production departments.

What goes into the new year's model is no longer conceived by a Japanese marketing analysis executive in a cramped Tokyo office building. The large manufacturers no longer think they can dazzle the public with a few modest improvements and a new color scheme. Instead the Japanese factories have learned to reach right down into their own racing team's experience to produce the bikes for next season. Instead of working from theory, they ask the riders what they think. The bikes being used in National or International competition truly serve as "prototypes," and what they learn on the tracks is translated into what is sold.

The first major Japanese manufacturer to learn this lesson fully was Suzuki. The number of riders now piloting Suzuki RMs goes to prove that this method of building motocross bikes is very beneficial to both rider (in terms of racing) and factory (in terms of sales).

With the wailing success of the RMs, Suzuki was able to lure a large portion of the motocross market. The guys on top at the other Japanese factories didn't take this too lightly; they had the same knowledge and experience in motocross bikes, and supported equally competitive teams. The only department in which they had lagged was in carrying their knowledge over into their production machines.

Honda has decided to stick it out for another year with their 125 Elsinore, completely abandoning their 250 until the RC series is trans-



YAMAHA YZ125D

formed into stock machines. Kawasaki is still trying to figure exactly what to sell to the public.

Yamaha, on the other hand, has been very busy. With a little help from a once-unknown SoCal pro — Bob Hannah — they yanked the 125cc National title away from Honda, gaining valuable information and experience along the way. And they followed Suzuki's lead in the "build them right" attitude toward producing stock machines. The result is the new YZ125D — a remarkably outstanding achievement resulting from Yamaha's first truly *serious* attempt at building production motocross bikes.

While it seems that all bikes in this wonderful day and age bear little resemblance to the under-powered, death-wish handling bikes of yesteryear, it is interesting to note that each brand retains its distinctive personality. The YZ-D is no exception to this rule. It represents the basic concepts of Yamaha taken to the furthest extremes.

While not always the innovator, Yamaha has always been quick to incorporate the latest mechanical developments into their production bikes. Although sometimes labeled "gimmicks," Yamaha's policy of trying something new has often provided landmarks in modern motocross technology.

It started with reed valves. Next came the "Thermal Flow" shock absorbers. That idea was discarded when Swede Hakan Andersson became the 250cc World Champion aboard the futuristic monoshock — the first successful theory geared toward increased suspension travel. Yamaha offered their "Monocross" system to the public the year after. Their most recent venture has been the use of air forks on the '76 models — another first for production bikes.

The Yamahas were definitely different, but most motocrossers interested in a new mount still approached the semi-revolutionary bikes with caution. Not showing any obvious superiority, both the monoshock system and the air fork setup seemed to some more hassle than they were worth.

All that has changed in '77 because Yamaha, taking the responsibility of using unique suspension components and design, has been forced to make them work as good, or better, than the other long-travel systems being offered in this era of suspension emphasis. They have, in fact, altered, redesigned, changed, replaced and modified the bike so much that it has become a completely different machine, and while it remains a Yamaha in spirit, the YZ125D is just that — all new.

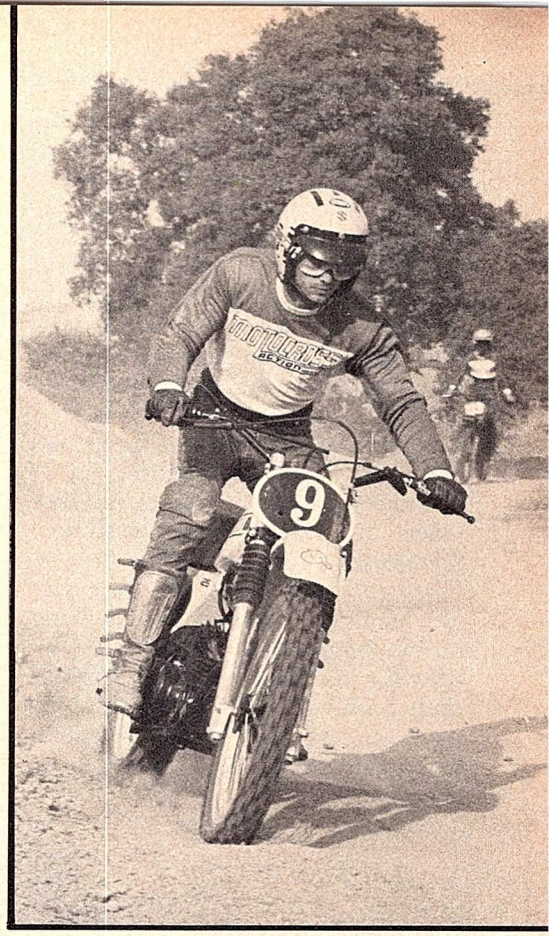
The YZ125D reeks of the latest developments in 125cc racing. It is obvious that Yamaha is well aware of *what it takes, the* hot setup, but this is the first time they've ever incorporated it into the bikes you and I get to ride. Instead of the accessory manufacturers and hop-up companies using the latest technology to make the bikes run farther, jump higher and go faster, the big companies are saving us the time, trouble and expense by doing it themselves.

GETTING NAKED WITH THE YZ-D

The new Yamaha 125 is a pretty bike. First off, it looks so *factory* — gee whiz, just like Bobby's. It's got an eye-catching front fender, the kind that sticks straight out, and the outer edges are angled outward. No one thought it was stock. Fork boots also adorn the front end. The tank is an OW-replica plastic model, well-shaped, easy to fill, no dents, no paint wearing off. The plastic scratches though, but the monster YAMAHA stickie (gotta get one of those for my YZ80 pit bike) held up extremely well in the mud. There used to be a neat "125" stickie on the side-plate too; it now resides at the bottom of a 35-cent carwash drain.

The entire bike looks clean, but the experienced eye of the 125 rider soon turns to the engine, for it is here that the race is won or lost.

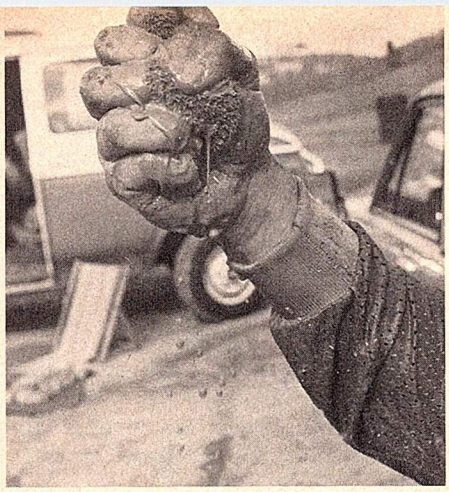
The exhaust and transfer ports have been lowered half a millimeter, but other than that the inside of the cylinder remains the same. The reed-valve setup has been retained, but the carb is mounted at an angle to allow for a single air box. Last year's carburetor was a 34mm Mikuni, but they dropped it back down to a more reasonable 32mm this year. A radial head is also in the package, and Yamaha has gone to a cylinder design in which the head bolts directly to the cylinder, instead of the top of the studs which hold the cylinder in place.

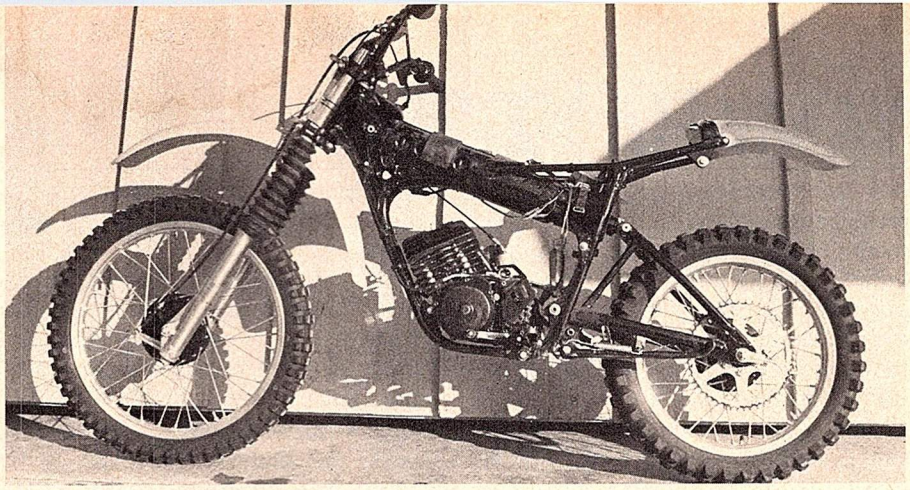


MXA test rider Gary Ogden prepares to slip the YZD into a slick Saddleback turn.

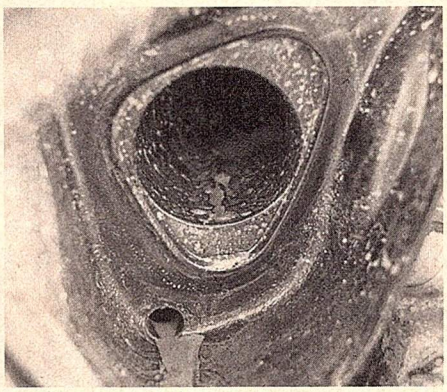
With the monoshock unit projecting through the spinal cord of the YZ's being, space limitations play an important role in the design of the engine. This causes problems, most of which Yamaha has been able to solve. It is not surprising to find the through - the - frame - over - the - head-under-the-monoshock pipe of '76 replaced by a left side up-pipe that tucks in. It is tucked in surprisingly well, only crisping the kneecaps of your Kohos when you're sitting on the gas cap. It's not particularly quiet.

Back to the air box. It is now a single unit, and opens on the right-hand side of the bike. Removing the side-plate semi-reveals the filter, which is further hidden by another plate and three Phillips screws. Although the filter has ample room to breathe, the air box is poorly sealed and largely exposed. The worst thing is that when you do get to the filter, you find it's that same fuzzy foam kind with the gangrene-yellow hairs that



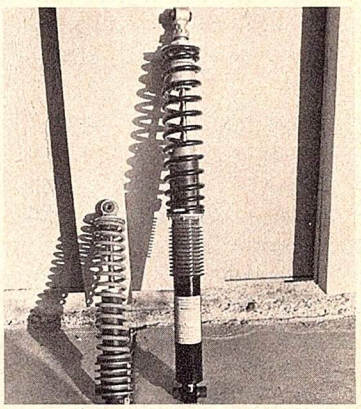


The naked YZ displays the present state of monoshock art.



The air filter became exposed after the side-plate fell off, and half a lap around a soggy track before we realized it was off was enough to cause considerable damage.

The 125-D should prove to be the most competitive motocrosser Yamaha has ever offered.



The DeCarbon gas shock dwarfs a conventionally sized Works Performance unit.

fall out every time you give it a bath.

The YZ125D shines with improvements. A 520 chain comes standard, guided by a tensioner up front, a skateboard-wheel-type roller on the swingarm pivot, and a chain guide near the rear sprocket. The front cable has boss routing devices. The footpegs have been beefed. The kickstarter even has a little rubber booty.

The biggest improvement in the D-model is its suspension. Both ends are pumping out about nine inches of good travel. Up front (complete with off-set axle) are a pair of forks still using air, but with a new light spring that is very similar to those on the RM125B. The forks use 18-pound springs and we found good success with about 13-14 psi of air. Yamaha has canned the canisters found on last year's bike. On top of the forks, rubber caps cover the air nozzles. Be careful. You'll lose the caps if you don't tape them on.

With complete control over air pressure and oil weight, the rider can select the type of fork action he prefers. The forks can also be moved up and down in the triple clamps, thanks to a new design — one used on the OWs. The handlebars mount at an angle, allowing fork mobility and relieving the direct stress on the forks, making the bars simply a turning instrument rather than an extension of the front end.

Yamaha has stuck with their monoshock design and extensively refined it. A new tubular swingarm is used, triangular in shape with the strength of the ancient pyramids. Rubber bushings are used, which don't cause warping like the bronze ones did.

The thing that makes the big difference, though, is the new shock being used. It is encased within the frame, but can be removed in the time it takes to make a piece of toast. The bike does have to be on a stand so you can drop the swingarm to let the shock out of its tubular tunnel.

Despite its large size, the shock is a fairly conventional DeCarbon system gas shock. The spring is quite large, and the thing has more cooling fins than any other single shock. Compression and rebound dampening are completely adjustable, even without removal. Yamaha will offer different spring rates and the shock is rebuildable. This design is far superior to the setup used in the previous monoshock models.

The YZ's beauty isn't only skin deep. A new frame, which can only be thoroughly enjoyed when the YZ-D is in the nude, is designed solely around the concept of a single shock. A large-diameter, double-pressed tube encases the shock from end to end, forming the backbone of the chrome moly structure.

As suspension at both ends increases, in the never-ending evolution of motocross bikes, the physical mass is pushed more into the center of the bike. The YZ is no exception.

The energy of the entire bike is centered around the steering head where the top shock mounts and receives the pressures. The power and stresses unite in this area, necessitating heavy gusseting and solid construction. A single downtube runs from the strong joint around the steering head, splitting directly above the center-port pipe

YAMAHA YZ125D

before sweeping into a double cradle frame. The rear of the cases forms part of the swingarm pivot, which is mounted as close as possible to the countershaft to avoid chain hassles. Naked, the mono frame is a study in directional forces, solidly built and formed only by function. It represents current technology being totally applied, an obvious design carried to its furthest limit. Everything adds up to a motorcycle which can be ridden fast without fear.

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN WHEN YOU LINE UP WITH THE RMs AND ELSINORES?

First off, the YZ125D rides like no other monoshock. The new DeCarbon gas shock, when properly adjusted, will compress quite easily in the first few inches of travel. The entire feel isn't soft — we rarely bottomed it out — just the first few inches. It produces a very desirable effect, in which the rear end sinks down when you're in the corners, a trait not found in last year's YZ.

Combined with the off-set axle and improved fork action, cornering becomes one of the monoshock's highlights. In fact, when you're riding the bike you often forget that the bike is a mono. The handling feels almost like that of a conventional bike. Where the Yamaha really cooks, though, is in an upright position going straight, the position that has established the monos as hot dez bikes.

Riding the YZ-D over gnarly terrain is pure delight. It soaks up any harshness, giving the rider a feeling of control and straightforward drive. The forks worked very well, but occasionally rebounded too quickly after the first plunge of travel. Steering was extremely precise, probably due to a one-degree pull in of the front end on the new chassis.

The YZ125D is final proof that the monoshock system can be used successfully in motocross racing. The shock never seemed to fade, and with the increased rigidity and lack of flex experienced in this type of design, it just may prove superior to the more popular laydown technique. It may be that other factories are foolish not to consider trying this type of suspension.

The 125 class is like no other. Since 125 engines are usually operating at peak performance, that peak performance becomes all-important in the operation of the bike. Naturally, riders strive for power, no matter what the cost. Engines will be tuned to the edge of destruction for the smallest gain in horsepower. Cylinders, pistons, cranks and rods are sacrificed in the drive for top-end ponies. So, the big question about the YZ125 is, what is the power like? The answer: it's as fast as any stocker, but stock is stock. The 125D has good low end, in the respect that the engine will pull strongly until it comes on the band. When it does hook up, it screams to life with a rather explosive burst. It's not a strong, steady surge of power, but more like two stages — countdown, and blast-off. The trick to the Yamaha, as in all 125s, is to keep it on. Wide open.

To control speed, shifting is used instead of throttle. The Yamaha six-speed has been improved, supposedly using the gearbox found in the OW works bikes. The gears are closely spaced, never giving the engine a chance to relax between cogs. As you progress through the gears, the power stays on a bit longer, utilizing the engine's powerband perfectly and taking full advantage of the wide-open technique. After the start you can forget about the clutch. Shifting is

SPECIFICATIONS

Make	Yamaha
Model	YZ125D
Country of Manufacture	Japan
Retail Price	$998

ENGINE

Type	Single-cylinder, two-stroke, reed-valve
Bore & Stroke	56mmx50mm
Displacement	123cc
Compression Ratio	7.7:1
Cylinder	Iron sleeve, 5-port
Carburetion	Mikuni 32mm
Ignition	CDI
Lubrication	Pre-mix, 32:1 Yamalube
Air Filter	Hairy oiled foam

TRANSMISSION

Type	Six-speed, close ratio
Ratios	2.461, 1.875, 1.500, 1.250, 1.090, 1.000
Primary	71/22 (3.227:1)
Ratio	51/12 (4.25)
Clutch	Wet, multi-plate
Chain	520 D.I.D

SUSPENSION

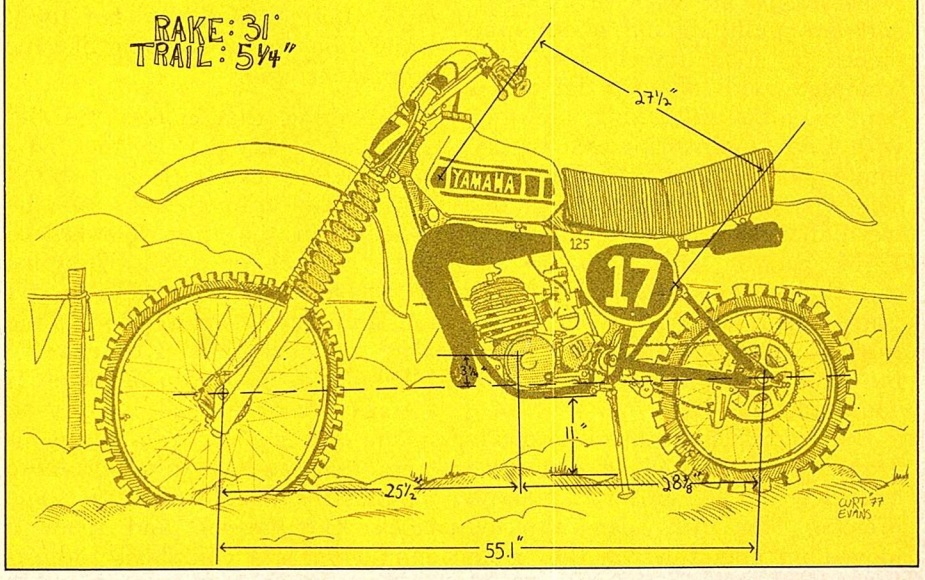
Front	Telescopic, off-set axle, air with light springs
Rear	Monoshock with single gas/air DeCarbon shock
Travel	Nine inches front and rear

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	55.1 inches
Ground Clearance	11.0 inches
Track Weight	195 pounds w/gas
Weight Bias	56% rear, 44% front

CAPACITIES

Fuel	1.5 gallons
Transmission	650cc
Forks	284cc



faultless, the tiniest twinkle of your big toe is more than enough to kick through the transmission.

Whoops! Almost forgot about the brakes. They also work perfectly, a trait Yamaha is famous for. And Yamaha has used the same wheel setup as last year, and the spokes stayed tight throughout the test.

Like all other long-legged lovelies, the YZ-D sits tall. The tank is well-shaped, the seat is comfy and levers, new bars and controls — the racer's means of communication with his machine — are right there. One small problem is that the countershaft sprocket cover is cut at such an angle that occasionally you can get the heel of your boot caught between it and the peg. The kickstarter tucks in well, but if attached incorrectly will begin to nudge into the reed-valve block. Rotating it a couple of notches back will cure the problem. The throttle seemed a little too far to turn. A Honda unit would work perfectly. The petcock is neat because if you forget to turn it on, your knee will hit it and turn it on — which is better than remembering to turn it on and having your knee turn it off.

The chain guide, which was welded to the swingarm, broke off after cracking.

The bike is very waterproof, if the side-plates stay on, but muddy conditions will cause the tensioner to lock up and cease functioning.

There are a few other mechanical problems, too. The side-plates are no longer held on by the screws that you turn halfway, then lock. A regular Phillips takes its place, but it tends to vibrate loose, and the entire plate seems inadequately mounted to begin with. The seat has only two bolts holding it on, which is good for quick removal. Unfortunately, they are located only halfway up the seat, leaving the rear portion unattached and vulnerable to destruction in case of crashes or loop-outs.

Besides its neat handling and strong motor, the YZ125D is a Yamaha, which means it is easy to take care of, dependable, parts are *usually* available everywhere — and it's less than a thousand bucks to begin with.

And at that price, the day that you own a Yamaha may be sooner than you think.

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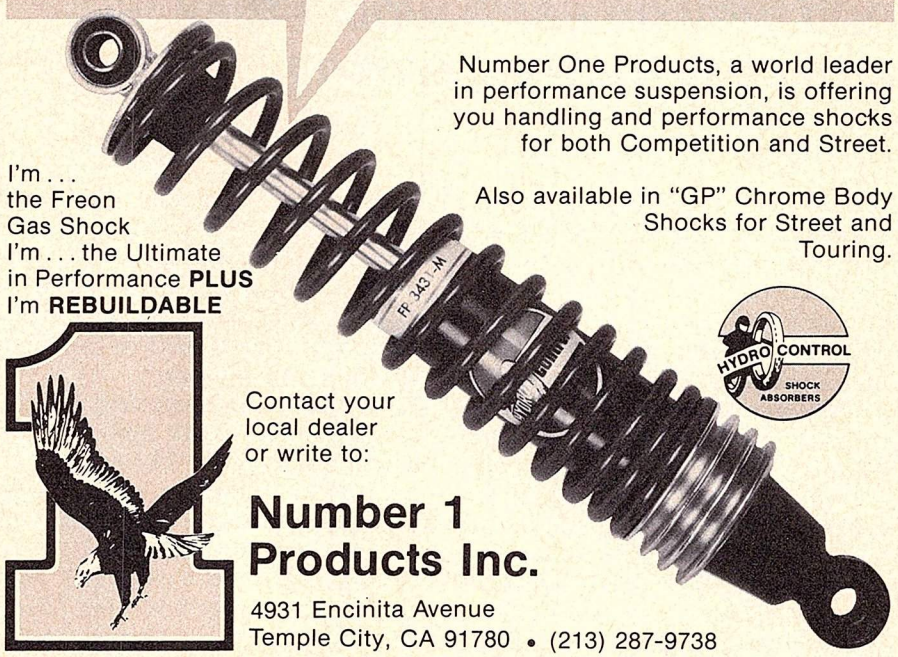

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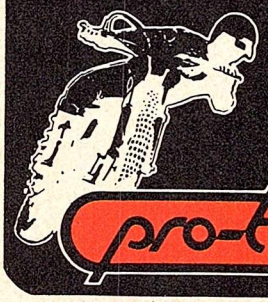

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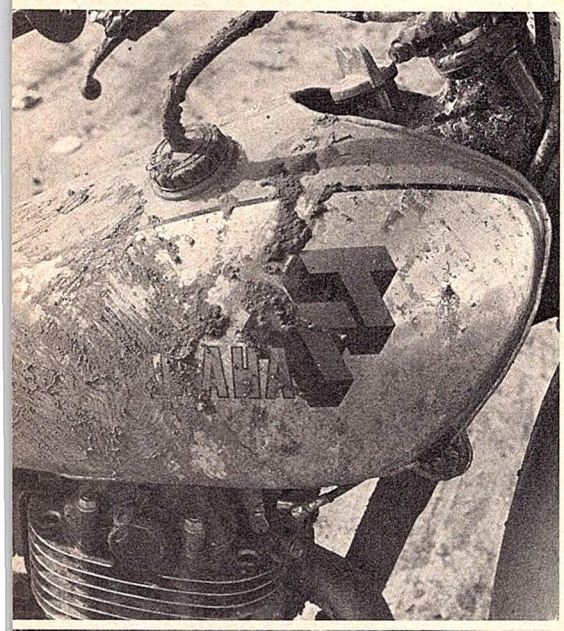
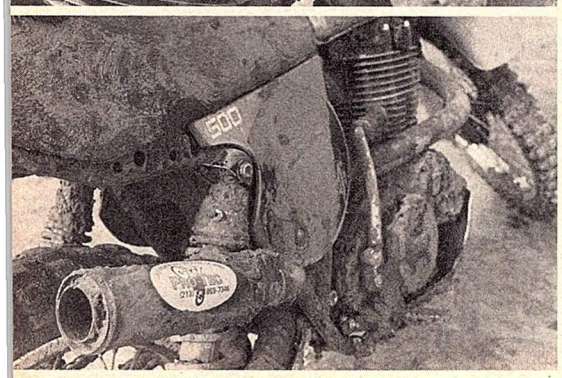
thunder in the woods

YAMAHA TT500D

Who are the four-stroke freaks and why on earth would they someday own a Yamaha?

"Someday, you'll own a Yamaha" has been the team cheer of Yamaha since that grizzly old coot first stroked his beard in the original Yamaha TV commercial a couple of years ago. How does this giant manufacturing and marketing operation plan to turn everyone within earshot into Yamaha owners? Simple. Build a machine for everyone. So, they made a list, checked it twice and found a small group of motorcycle enthusiasts down there between trials riders and hillclimb aficionados called "four-stroke freaks." After identifying, tagging and cataloging the species they built the TT500. Only one question remains: Does the four-stroke freak really exist, or is he extinct, gone the way of the BSA Gold Star, the Matchless G-80 and the Indian Woodsman?





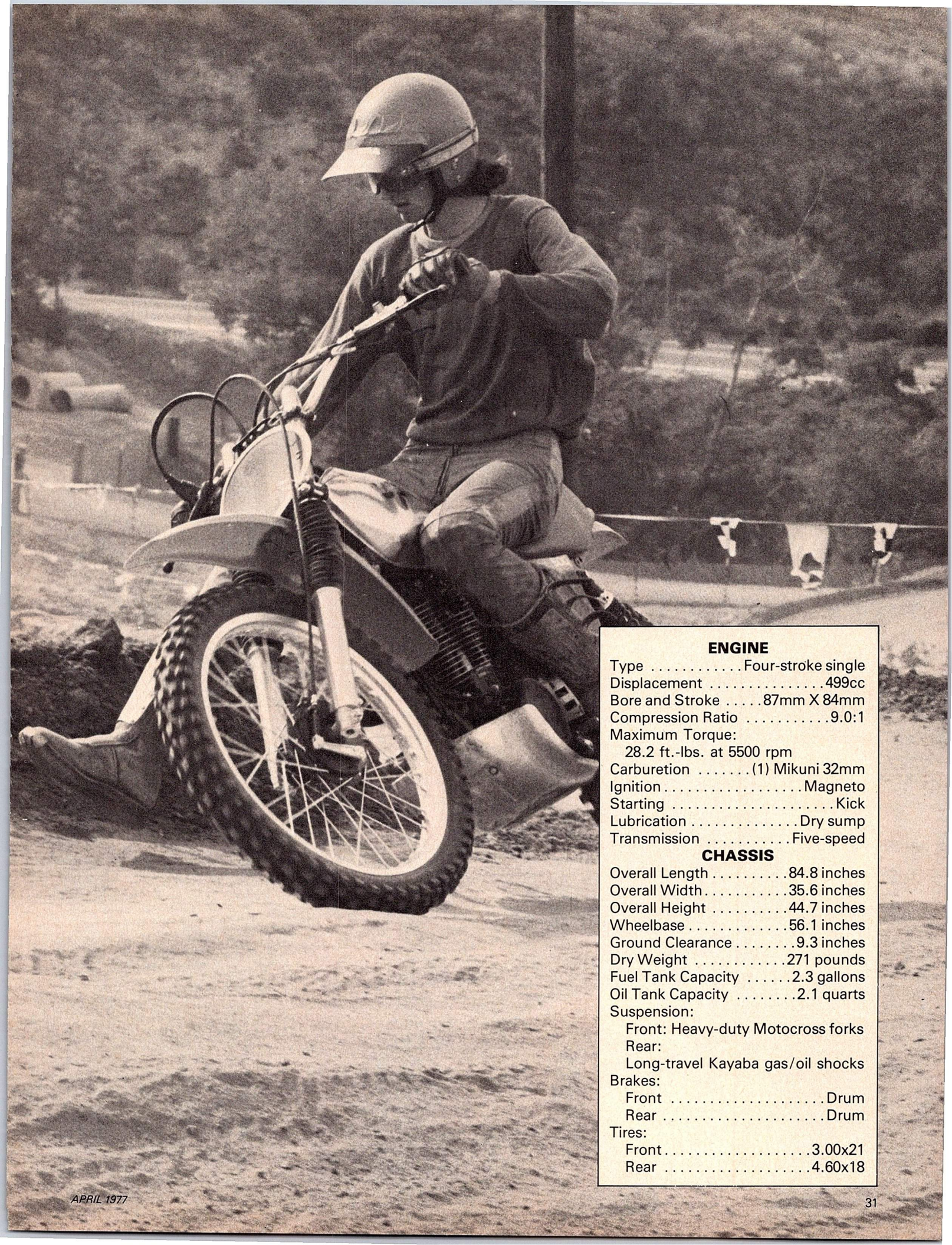
Most likely, the guys who rode the old thumpers won't ride this new model from Japan. Their bones are too brittle. But the spirit of the four-stroke freak lives in a generation of riders to come who have yet to discover what valves and cams can do for a dirt machine. Bengt Aberg's four-stroke GP bike, based on the TT500 engine, will doubtless rekindle enthusiasm for the breed and other world championship motocross riders, such as Roger DeCoster and Gerrit Wolsink, have expressed beliefs that the four-stroke will return to prominence in the next five years.

Where does this leave the TT500? A nice bike to ride but not at all competitive in motocross. Of course it's not designed to be. Forest-legal exhaust system quiet as a church mouse, cumbersome skid plate and a 271-pound dry weight won't get you around a motocross course in zippy fashion. It will, however, get you anywhere else with ease, style, comfort, legality and complete reliability. Motocross suspension with laid-down gas Kayabas producing 5½ inches of rear wheel travel and YZ-type forks good for 7½ inches give a very smooth ride and excellent reaction to big holes under power. But performance is definitely limited by its exhaust system and weight. We bolted on an accessory exhaust pipe and silencer offered by Pro-Tec that gave us a little more top end and a little less low end, and made the machine sound a bit more authoritative although completely illegal for woods riding.

But past a certain point, the bike's mass combined with the torquey oversquare engine and relatively short (17-inch) swingarm make the back end want to pass the front end. If the rider wishes to unsideways himself with a throttle adjustment, he'll soon find the hefty 9:1 compression almost stops the rear wheel cold when he lets up. This can be hairy. It is better to leave it wide open and ride it out, or better still to apply power judiciously to avoid getting sideways in the first place. These extreme acceleration and deceleration forces, by the way, chew up rear tires like dog biscuits.

Traditionally the big-bore four-strokes have always been bears to start and the TT500 is no exception. It is virtually impossible for a normal person to kick the engine through the compression stroke without help from a pile-driver. The trick is to get the piston past the compression stroke with a pressure release lever provided for that purpose and a little window in the cam housing that lets you see when you've reached the right point. Then a healthy kick will hopefully send it around its exhaust cycle with enough momentum to carry it through another compression stroke so it will maybe fire if you're lucky. If you're not, the engine has to be set up again for another try. This can become quite frustrating if you're trying to hold the bike up on the side of a hill or are axle-deep in mud. Keeping the engine in a good state of tune will, of course, increase the chances of it starting on the first try and, like long-time Husky owners, TT500 owners eventually get the procedure dialed.

With all ideas of racing the TT500 erased from your mind, you will find the machine a friendly and enjoyable recreation bike that will provide many, many hours of fun for any rider anywhere he chooses to ride. Four-strokes are gaining popularity even among professional motocrossers who want an all-purpose bike for their non-professional riding. In other words, four-strokes are cool, and like The Fonz says, the most important thing is to be cool.



ENGINE

Type	Four-stroke single
Displacement	499cc
Bore and Stroke	87mm X 84mm
Compression Ratio	9.0:1
Maximum Torque:	
28.2 ft.-lbs. at 5500 rpm	
Carburetion	(1) Mikuni 32mm
Ignition	Magneto
Starting	Kick
Lubrication	Dry sump
Transmission	Five-speed

CHASSIS

Overall Length	84.8 inches
Overall Width	35.6 inches
Overall Height	44.7 inches
Wheelbase	56.1 inches
Ground Clearance	9.3 inches
Dry Weight	271 pounds
Fuel Tank Capacity	2.3 gallons
Oil Tank Capacity	2.1 quarts
Suspension:	
Front: Heavy-duty Motocross forks	
Rear:	
Long-travel Kayaba gas/oil shocks	
Brakes:	
Front	Drum
Rear	Drum
Tires:	
Front	3.00x21
Rear	4.60x18

ALL SMILES after his main event victory at the American Motocross Finals, Marty Smith absorbs some of the cheering admiration 30,000 spectators can measure out after an evening of watching major league racing kicked back in the comfort of their own sports stadium.

AMERICAN MOTOCROSS FINALS

Coming of age in the stadiums

By Jody Weisel

Photos by Paul Boudreau and Marcia Holley

Stadium motocross has finally come into its own after a tumultuous weaning period. After eight years of learning the traditions and peculiarities of European motocross a new American motocross was born on a cool clear night in Anaheim Stadium at the $25,000 American Motocross Finals. It was a breech birth at best as the riders chafed at the new short-track format and eventually tried to revolt. Contending that stadium racing wasn't motocross, the riders formed a boycott a week before the race and signed a petition refusing to ride unless they got more money and the format was changed back to the old moto system.

AMA Professional Motocross Manager Mike DiPrete, who had devised the new format that included a series of four qualifying motos, two semis and a consolation leading into a final main event, called a riders' meeting at the Phoenix Trans-AMA. DiPrete gently cajoled the riders about their responsibilities as professionals and noted that one week before the event was not the proper time to hold the promoter up for more money.

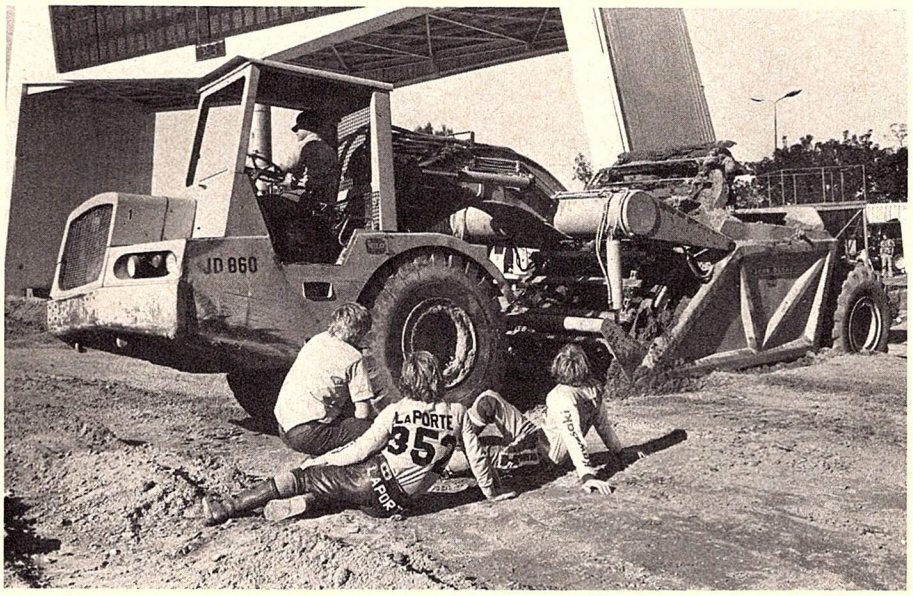
The riders' meeting turned into a shouting match and the issue of whether or not the riders would line up behind the California Angels Stadium starting gate was still in doubt. The rider boycott was lead by Euro-Americans Brad Lackey and Jim Pomeroy. They were reportedly asking for $3000 start money apiece or they wouldn't appear. The straws that broke the rider strike came from three different sources: First — National Champions Tony DiStefano and Jimmy Weinert refused to sign the petition on the grounds that they had made a commitment to appear; secondly, Honda was co-sponsoring the event and forced Honda team riders Marty Smith and Tommy Croft to remove their names from the embarrassing petition. Finally, the riders' union itself fell apart as the date of the race neared and one by one the riders donned leather and plastic to do battle.

Lackey and Pomeroy sat the event out, while coincidentally signing with Team Honda for 1977. Honda is committed to sponsor Anaheim for five more years, which leaves the labor leaders of motocross between a hard place and a knobby.

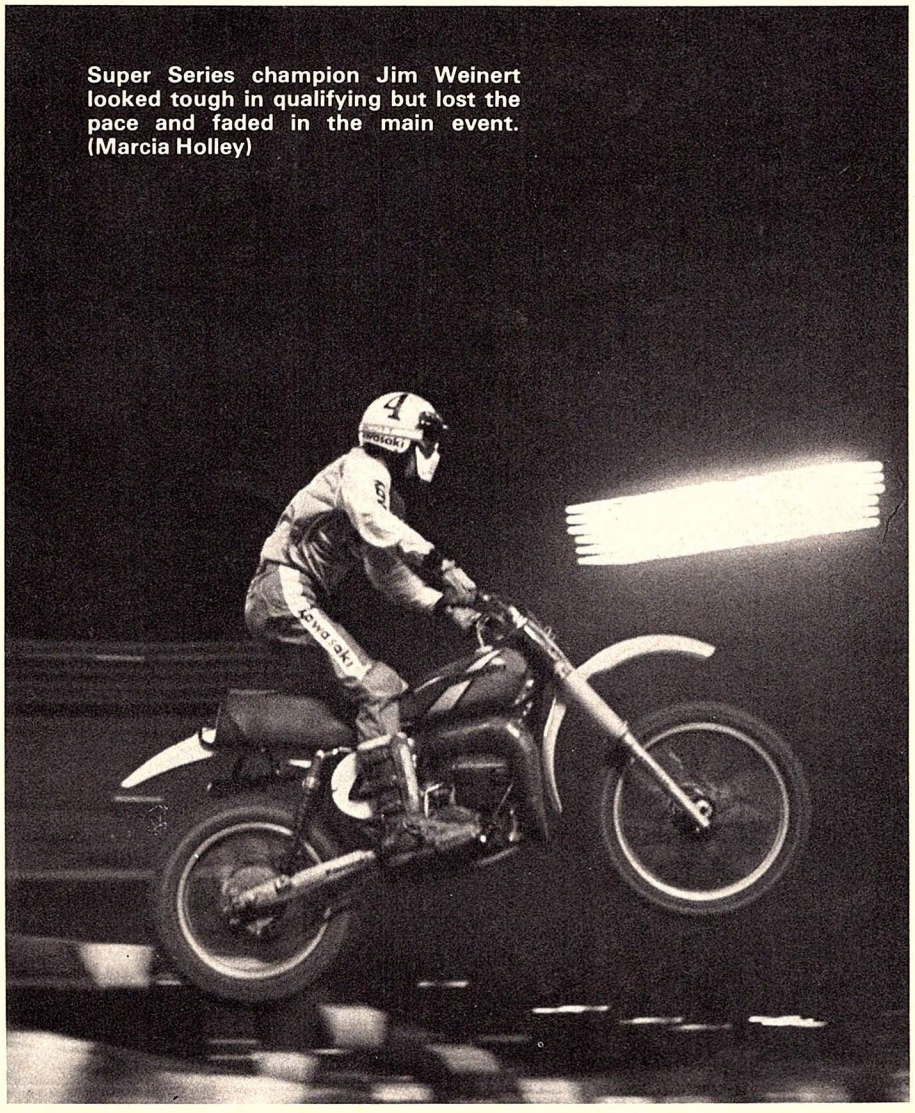
And what were the riders resisting so vehemently? If you ask the 30,569 spectators who flooded the stands they were fighting one of the most outstanding nights of racing ever staged in a stadium. There were four qualifying heats composed of 20 riders, out of which the top five places of each heat would advance

Tension before the final event: Gaylon Mosier and Rich Eierstedt prepare themselves mentally for the start.

AMERICAN MOTOCROSS FINALS



Danny LaPorte, Suzuki mechanic Alan Hahn and Gary Semics observe the big-bore equipment used to build the artificial track. Semics withdrew from the program after twisting an ankle in practice.



Super Series champion Jim Weinert looked tough in qualifying but lost the pace and faded in the main event. (Marcia Holley)

directly to the main. The four heats were hot and heavy with Weinert and DiStefano battling bar-to-bar in the first round. The big D won that skirmish, but the fans hardly had time to sit down before the next heat saw Pierre Karsmakers, riding his last race for Honda, motor away from the pack. Round three was another Honda cakewalk as Marty Smith smoked to an easy win over a startlingly fast Mickey Boone. The fourth qualifier had Rich Eierstedt

Kent Howerton gets a smoochie for his outstanding come-from-behind heat win.

start what looked like the third Honda sweep out of the four motos, but way back in ninth place Husqvarna's Kent Howerton had other plans. In ten laps Kent Howerton came from the middle of the pack to nip Eierstedt's red RC250 at the line.

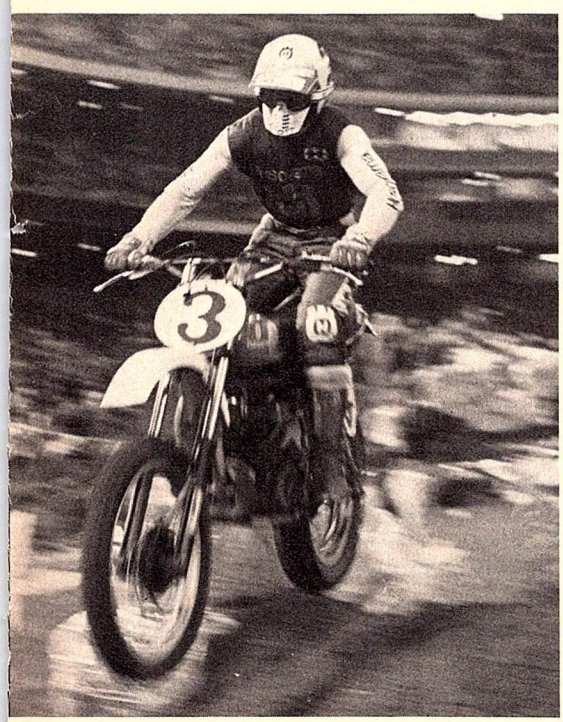
Those riders who didn't make the big-bucks main event by placing in the top five in the heats advanced to two 20-man semifinals in which only the top two riders would have a shot at the final event. Kenny Zahrt was back on Bultaco and back on top in semi one, while 16-year-old Jeff Jennings took round two on his factory Suzuki.

The fans were rattling off of the rafters as race after race came pouring off the starting line and down the whooped front straight right at them. The penultimate race of the night was the consolation round for the riders who failed to make the 24 slots in the American Motocross Final. Kawasaki teamster Terry Clark, riding a possible production version of the factory Greenies, won the Consolation after a hard-fought duel with stock Suzuki-mounted Gary Ogden. Ogden's bike was so stock that he had borrowed it from the Bazzer the day before the race.

The big boys came to the line as

Continued on page 68

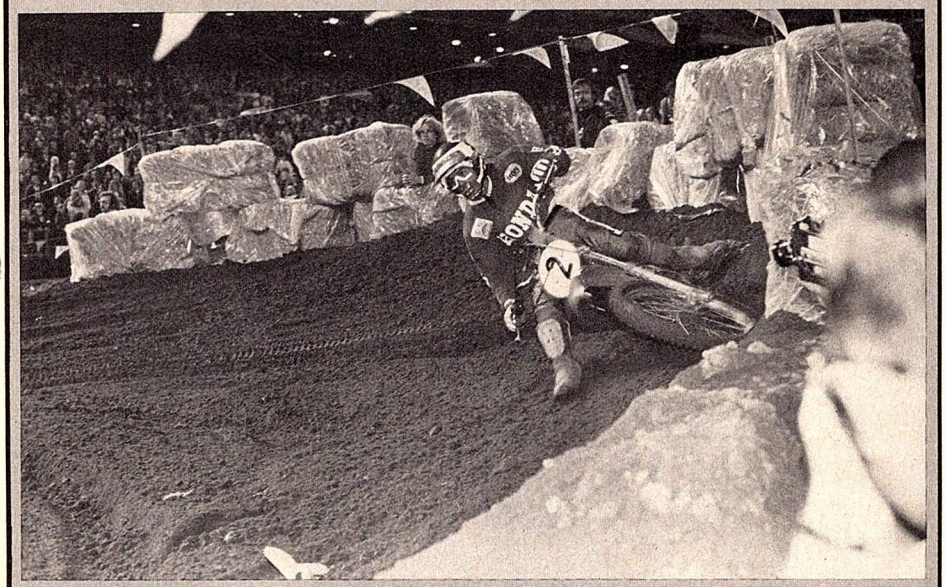
Howerton trailed DiStefano throughout the main event and nipped him for third at the finish.



speak out

MR. SMITH GOES TO ANAHEIM

Riding less, making more and feelin' good



Marty Smith is home from the European wars and out of the 125 all at the same time. The bionic motocrosser celebrated his move to the big bikes with a powerful Anaheim victory.

MXA: What did it feel like to win Anaheim Stadium?

MS: Considering that I had had so much bad luck during the year it felt really good. My bike was running really good and it hung in there and didn't break. I was really happy.

MXA: What makes stadium racing different from natural motocross?

MS: It is different because it is so tight. There aren't that many places where you have to stand on the pegs on most of the night tracks, but Anaheim was pretty rough. Anaheim may have been more tiring than a regular motocross track because it was both tight and rough. It was more like a sprint.

I told myself that it wasn't that important and that I should go out and run my own race. There are a lot of fans out there and a lot of guys go crazy. The riders see a large crowd and a lot of them want to show off. I got hyped because it was hometown and there were a lot of friends out there. It didn't make me want to show off, it made me want to win.

I'm usually more pumped up for a National, but at Anaheim I was pumped up the whole night. On the starting line I told my mechanic, I'm going for the holeshot!

MXA: What do you think is the future of stadium motocross?

MS: It is definitely going to get bigger because that is where the money comes from. I think there is no doubt that it is going to get better. It was one of the best paybacks I've ever had and it was fun. I'm going to compete in all the stadium races this year and will stay in the states. Stadium motocross is really good. It introduced the idea of motocross to a lot of people who had no idea of what it was like. Many people think it is a dirty sport with greasy motorcycles. But after seeing a stadium race they see what it really is, and they might go to that instead of a football game.

It will motivate the fans to go to a regular outdoor motocross, although when they get out there and find out that it isn't as pleasurable as sitting in the stands they will probably hit the next stadium. When motocross starts getting televised the guys who are doing good will be remembered. People will watch motocross on television and then when it comes to their town they will want to go out and see it because they have heard of some of the riders.

OVER THE TOP

A STUDY OF STYLES JUST BEFORE THE HOT LINE BURNS OUT

By Paul Boudreau

It doesn't take long for a hot line to become popular. Once the leader determines the quickest way to get around, his groove gets groovier. In the case of this high spot on the soft Lake Sugar Tree motocross track near Axton, Virginia, as the groove got deeper, the line got better since it made the mound a little lower. But there comes a time in the life of every line when its value to the racer becomes strained as it succumbs more and more to the deteriorating effects of the continuous passage of man and machine. Eventually, of course, the line gets burned out and the leader, along with the rest of the pack, searches out a better way, or at least one that won't be such a threat to the constitution of their ankles.

There's a zone, however, between hot and burnt when the line begs the question "What am I doing here?" as these Trans-AMA Support riders — Fred Vertucci of New York, Rick Walsworth of Indiana, Tom Cumby of North Carolina and Gary Kuest of Washington — must be asking themselves as they hit the trench again and hope they can get their feet back on the pegs before the whoop-de-dos come up.

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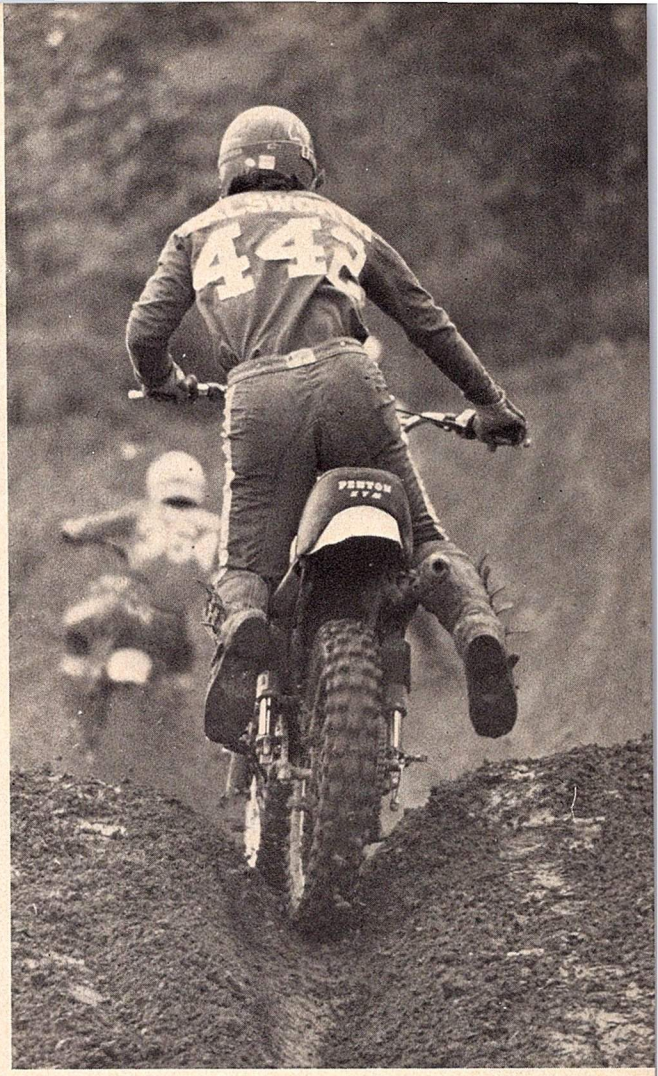
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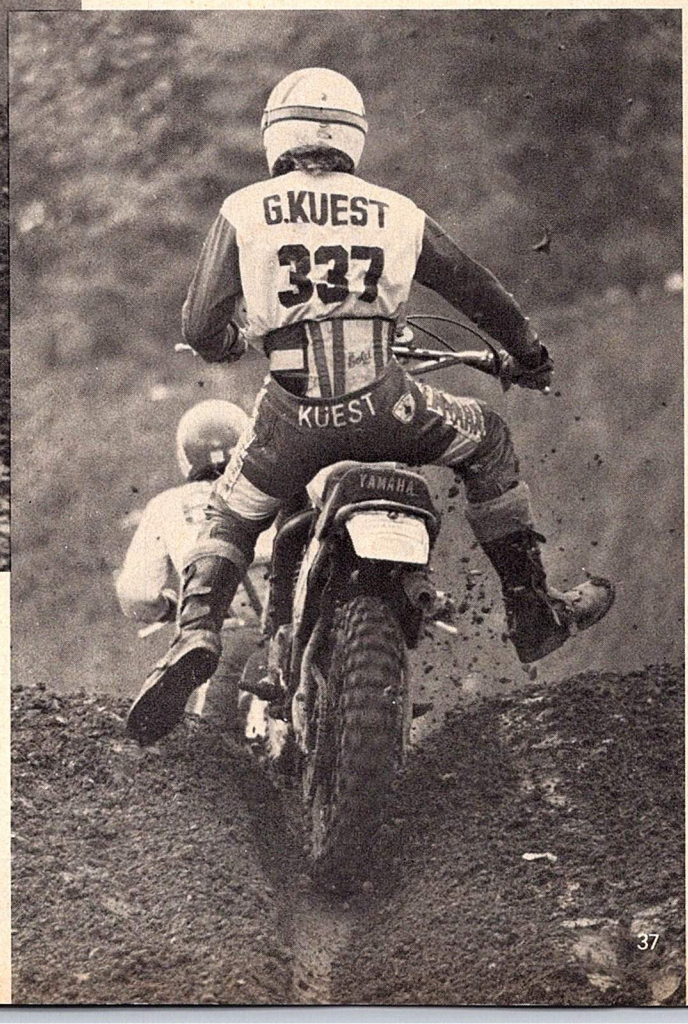
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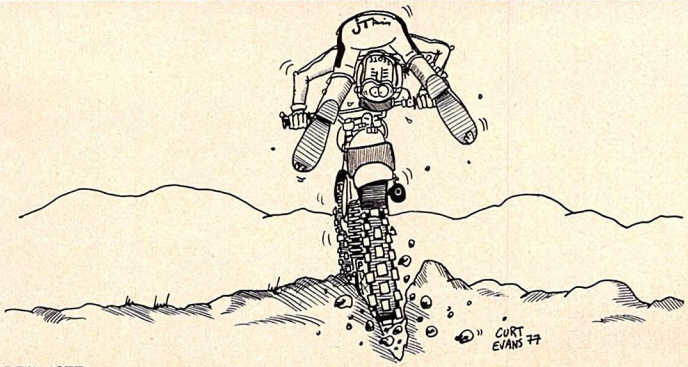
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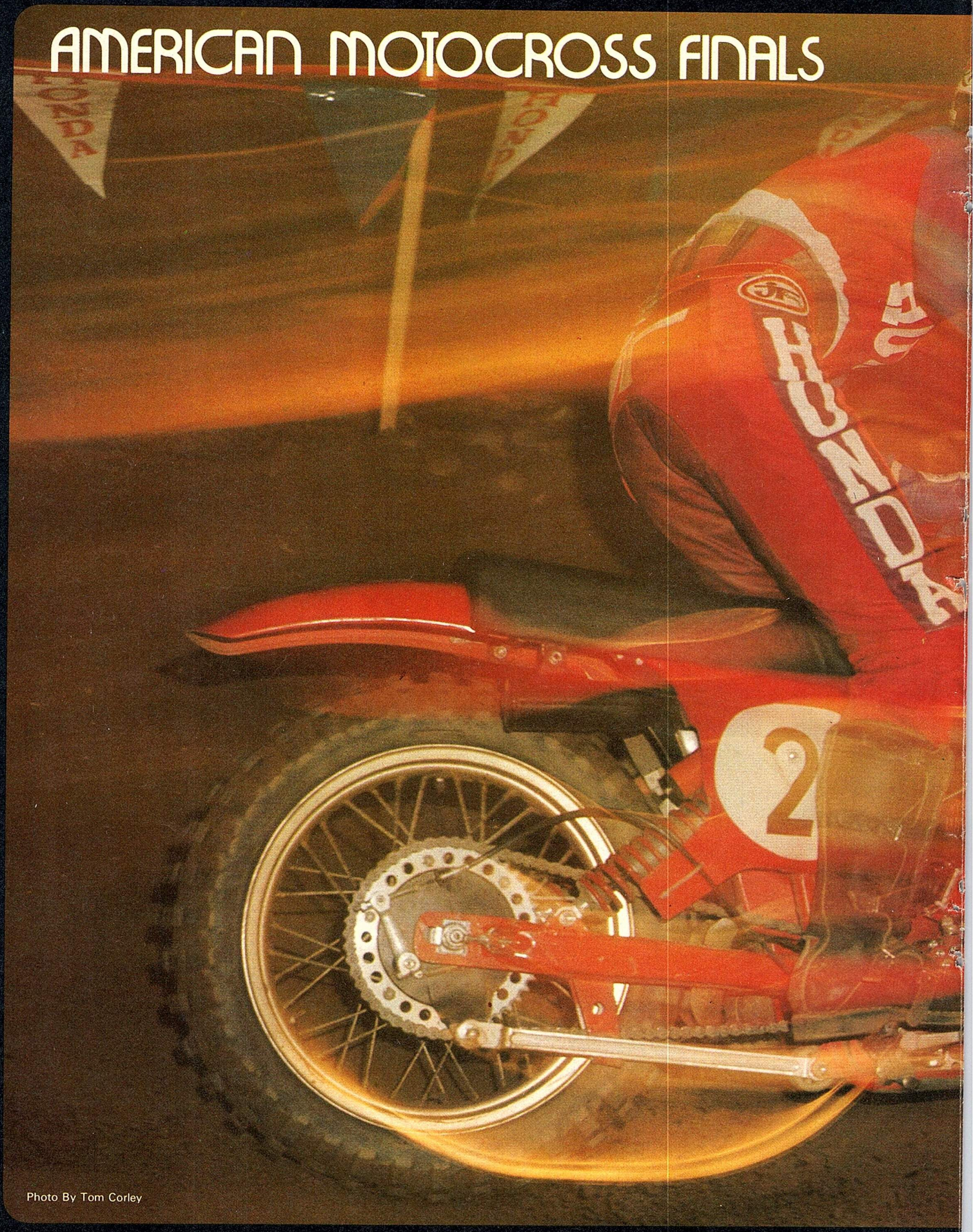
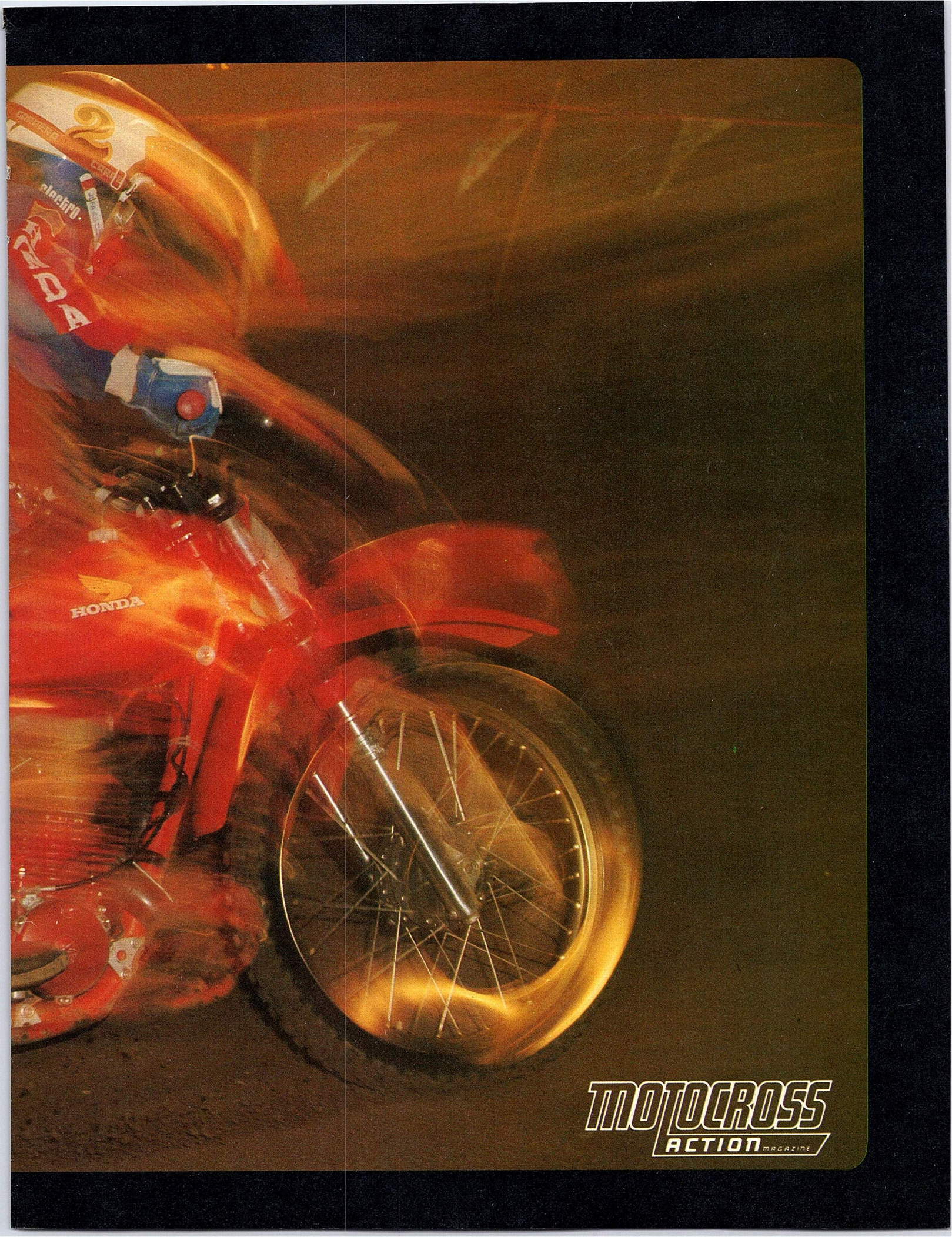


Photo By Tom Corley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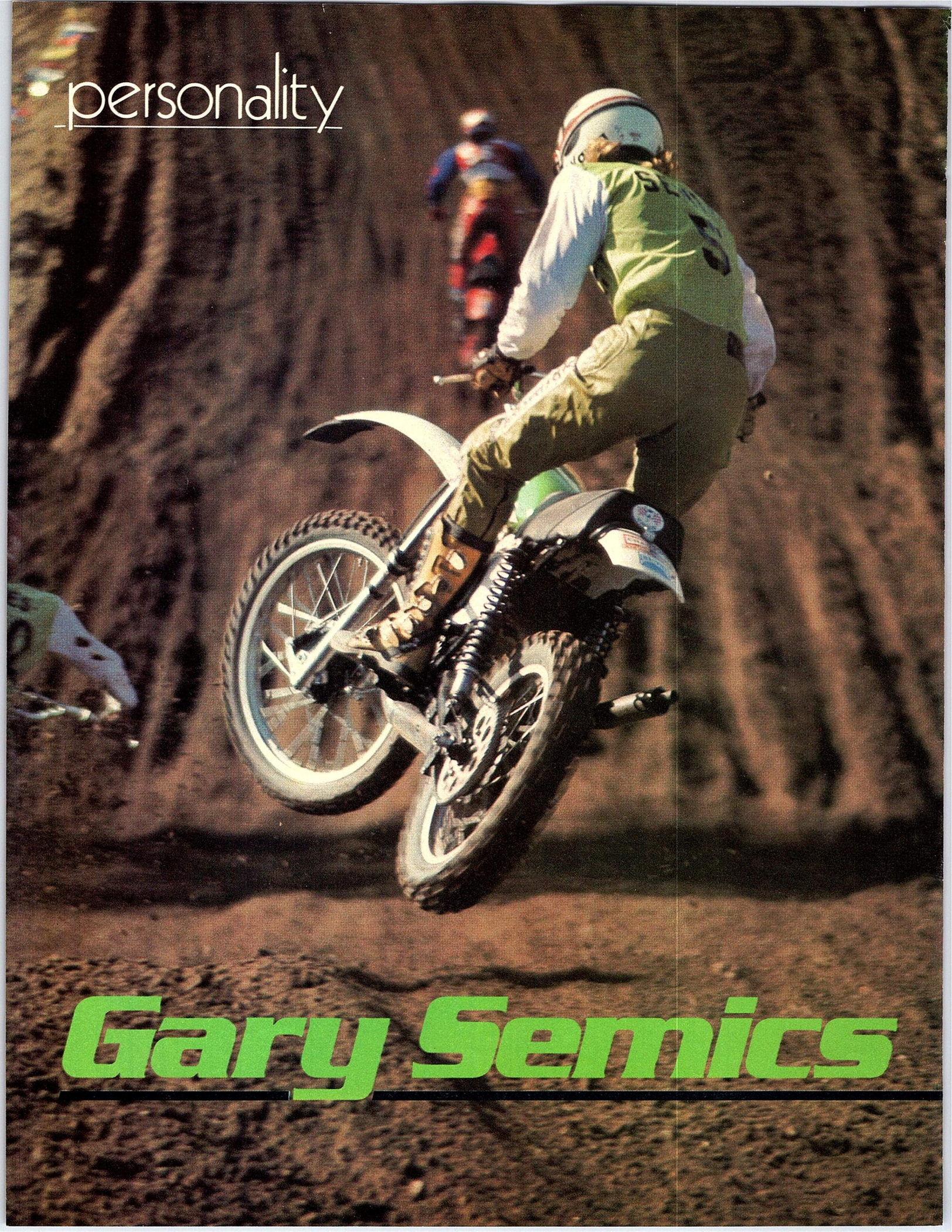


Gary Semics

There is no easy way to the top.

Roger DeCoster calls him the most talented American motocross rider. He has holeshot and led the United States Grand Prix at Carlsbad three years in a row. Twice he has contested the AMA National Championship down to the wire, losing it in 1976 to Kent Howerton by only six points. He's won motos and events in every major racing category and is probably the most feared and respected motocross pro in the country. Yet little has been written about him and he's never been interviewed by a motorcycle magazine. Why? Perhaps because of his quiet nature and his unassuming attitude about himself. Gary Semics is a gentleman in every sense of the word. He neither brags about his successes nor makes excuses about his failures. He's not a colorful rider outside of the best sideways clicks in practice, but his smooth style and breathtaking speed outshine the other riders. His dedication to the sport is total.

Gary came from humble beginnings, born in Youngstown, Ohio, on the lst day of May in 1954. When he was seven he moved with his family to nearby Lisbon, where he worked on his dad's farm, planting and picking corn, tending the cattle, baling hay and doing the chores.

His dad, Pete, was a hillclimbing man and by the time Gary was 13 he had a 160 Honda. Gary enjoyed tooting around in the woods with his little bike and accompanying his dad to the hillclimbs, but it wasn't until a friend from Lisbon, Dale Burton, took him to a local motocross that Gary got turned on to racing.

"If some guy is going faster than I am, I'm not going to block him or knock him off. That's not what motocross is about."

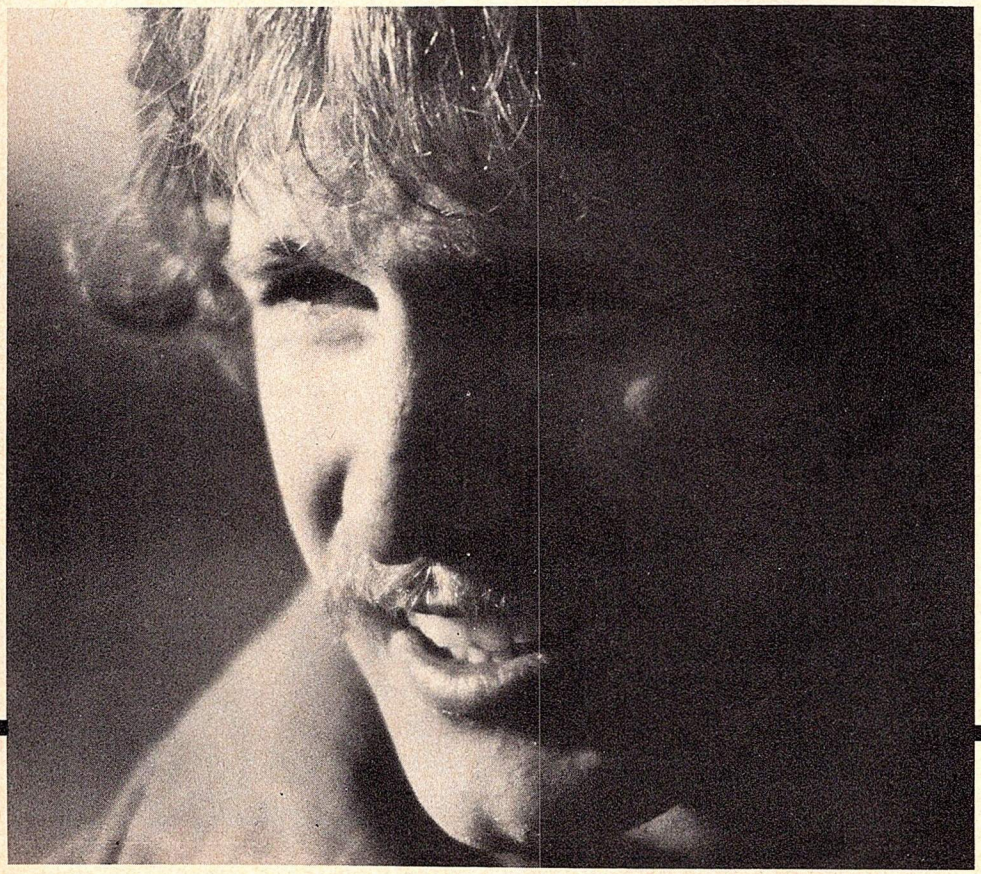
With a 200 Bultaco, Gary won the first race he entered and from there on there was no stopping him. By the time he was 15, he was winning the Open class on a 400 Husqvarna and, with some help from Twin Falls Sports Cycles in Akron, was picking up cash prizes in New York and Pennsylvania as well as in his home state. Then Yamaha of Mansfield offered him a ride in the Trans-AMA on a CZ, so in 1971 Gary dropped out of high school to pursue his motocross career. With a great deal of trouble keeping his CZ together, he managed to make enough money to get from race to race and the following winter found himself in Florida for the Winter-AMA series. Things looked bleak in Florida because his CZ kept breaking and as a last ditch effort he asked Rolf Tibblin, who was managing the Husqvarna team, for a ride. The next week Tibblin showed up with a new Husky for Gary.

Gary rode the 1972 season for Husqvarna, doing his own work on the bike and driving from race to race. That's a tough road for a newcomer but that's how you learn the ropes, and he did it again in 1973. Finally, in 1974, he got a mechanic and finished fourth in the 500cc National Championships. A year later he signed with Kawasaki for the 1975 season and finished sixth in the 500cc Nationals on the new bike, but returned again the following year on a Kawasaki to finish second in the 500 and fifth in the 250. In 1977, Gary will once again be riding a factory Kawasaki in the Super Series, the 250 and 500 National Championships and the Trans-AMA.

We talked with Gary at his home in Huntington Beach, California, the week after the American Motocross Finals which marked the end of the 1976 season.

"Boy, I'm sure glad that's over with," sighed Gary. "Now I'm going to take the next month and rest before I start training again. If you push yourself all year without a break, you get worn out and you don't feel like trying anymore. There is a point where you're over-training and tiring yourself out and you have to be able to find the point where you're doing enough but not too much.

"I've learned one thing from



You can write Gary Semics care of Kawasaki Motor Corp., 2009 E. Edinger, Santa Ana, California 92705, or care of MOTOCROSS ACTION Magazine.

Gary Semics

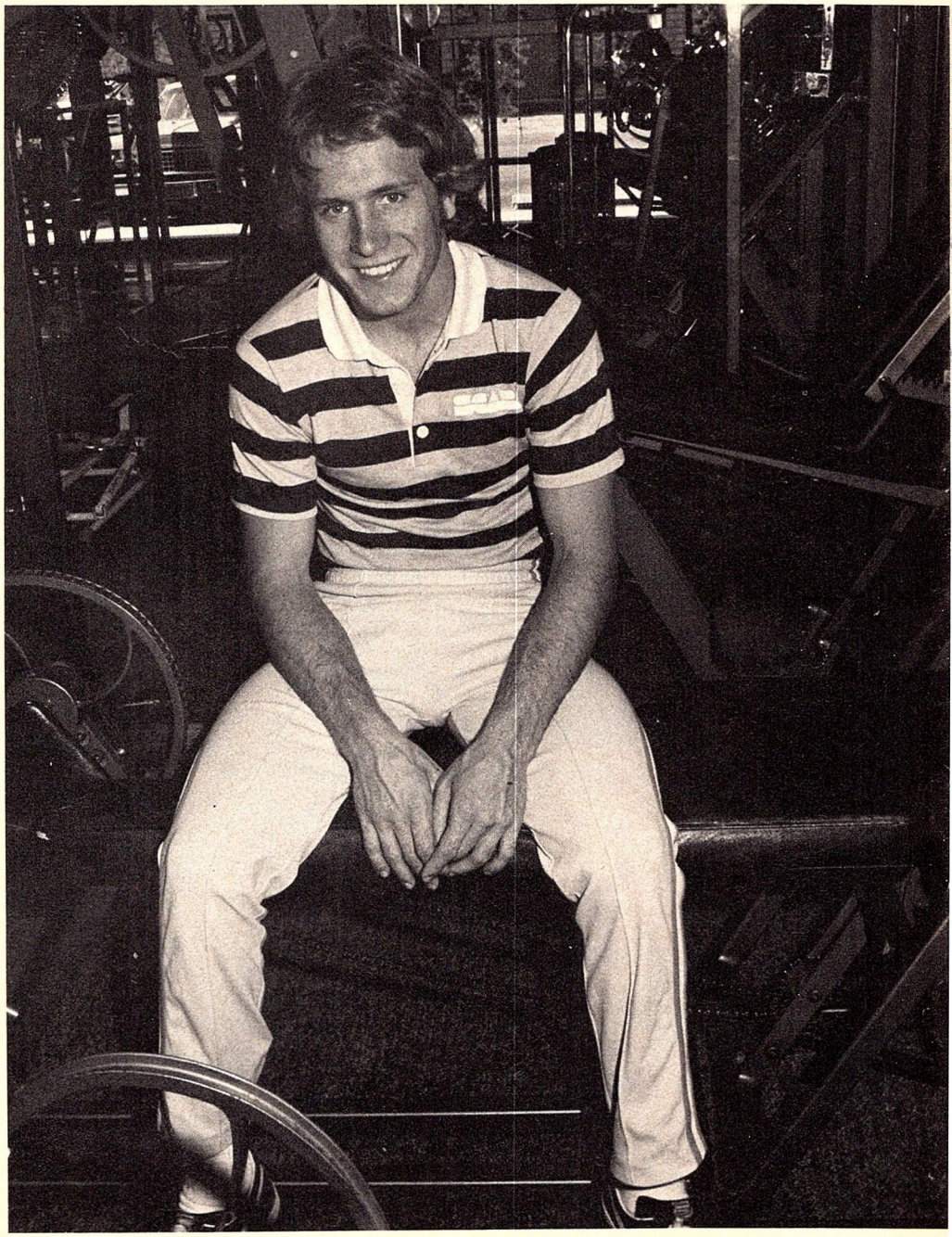
professional motocross and that is if you want to be the best, the best in anything, then you've got to be prepared to do a lot of hard work. You've got to discipline yourself. First you've got to say 'that's what I'm going to do,' and then do whatever it takes to do it. Sometimes the things you have to do aren't very enjoyable and you're not going to want to do them. But you have to be smart enough to see beyond what you're doing *now* to be able to know what the results of your hard work are going to be. There is nothing worth having that isn't worth working for. Training and getting in shape have their bad points, but you have to be able to prepare yourself for the bad points and get the job done. I just happen to like all the good points about motocross. They seem to overcome the bad points.

"If you get a bad start you might have to bump your way through traffic a little and make somebody a little unhappy."

"Like right now I'm relaxing because there's no racing going on, but the indoor races start in March so in a few weeks the work is going to start. There's no secret to the training. I don't do anything special and I'm not giving away any secrets by telling you my training schedule. I know how hard it is and I know how far most people are willing to push themselves, so I'm sure even if they knew what to do they wouldn't do it.

"The training schedule itself is a daily routine from the time I get up in the morning to the time I go to bed at night. The target of my training is to be able to maintain 100-percent output for a 45-minute moto, so each time I work out, I do it for an hour. The first thing I do in the morning when I wake up is regular exercises to start up my body, get my heart pumping and my breathing going and to warm up my muscles, ligaments and tendons. Then I jog down to the beach and run for an hour before breakfast. I allow myself to cool down for half an hour or so before eating and then wait a couple of hours after eating before starting up again. It's important not to stress your system by eating right after you work out or working out before your food is completely digested. Then I'll go down to SCAR in Santa Ana to work out on the weight machines. SCAR is Scientific Conditioning and Rehabilitation. It's a complete physical fitness center with everything you need to get in shape and stay there. They have Nautilus weight machines which are designed to weight your arms and legs through their entire range of movement. They also have a sauna, whirlpool and massage, treadmills, regular barbells . . . everything you need. I go down there and go through a series of one-hour workouts that start by warming up on the treadmill to get my heart beating at a maximum sustained rate, and then working out on the machines to maintain that heart rate for an hour.

"In the afternoon I'll have another real hard workout and then later in the day I'll go play racquetball or tennis just to have something to do. I'll do that for maybe three days a week and then the other two days I'll ride the motorcycle, making sure I do at least two 45-minute motos each day. Then two weeks before I



After a hard workout, Gary feels good.

start racing again, I'll ride the motorcycle every day, like six days a week, doing two 45-minute motos each day to make sure I'm completely back into it. Then when I get to Daytona for the first race I'll be ready and completely confident. After the season starts I'll change over to my maintenance schedule of working out at SCAR twice a week, running twice a week and riding maybe once a week. The racing takes care of the weekend and all together my week is filled. That's why I try to maintain a simple lifestyle. I really don't have time for anything else."

We talked about some of the great rides Gary had in the 1976 season, including exciting battles with Marty Smith, Tommy Croft and Roger DeCoster.

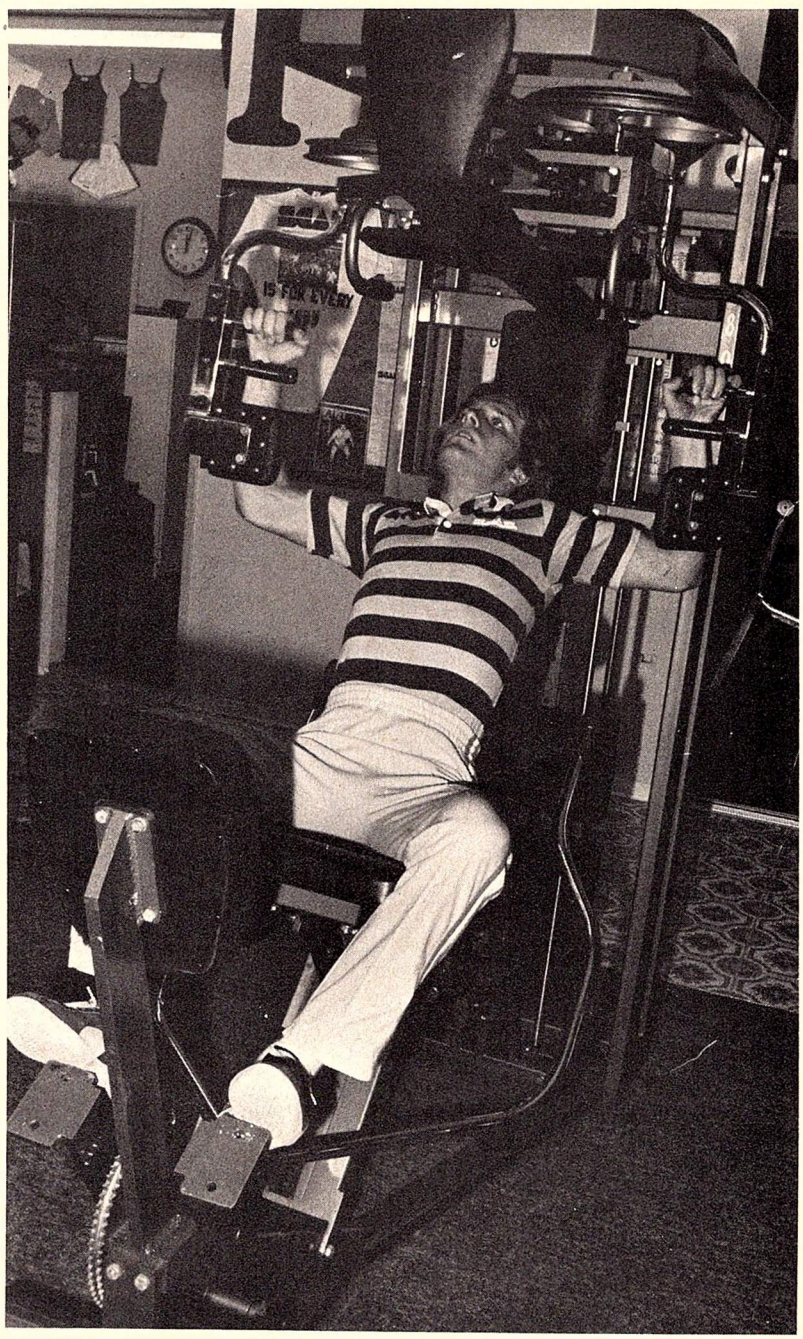
"When I'm in a race and I'm dicing with another guy for the lead or just racing really hard with the other guys, I like to think that I'm sharing the experience with them, not fighting them for it. Motocross is a sport and winning is not a matter of life and death. I go into a race with a plan and the other guys have their plans and I race my race and they race theirs, and I like to think that the fastest guy will win. If some guy is going faster than I am, I'm not going to block him or knock him off so he won't beat me. That's not what motocross is about. I just do what I can, but if the other guy turns out to be going faster, then he wins the race."

"When that gate goes down your mind goes completely blank and you're not realizing anything that's happening around you."

We asked Gary if he had any weak points that needed work.

"I need to be more aggressive, racing a little harder, going for it a little bit more. I learned a lot about passing this year. I learned that you have to be smart as well as fast.

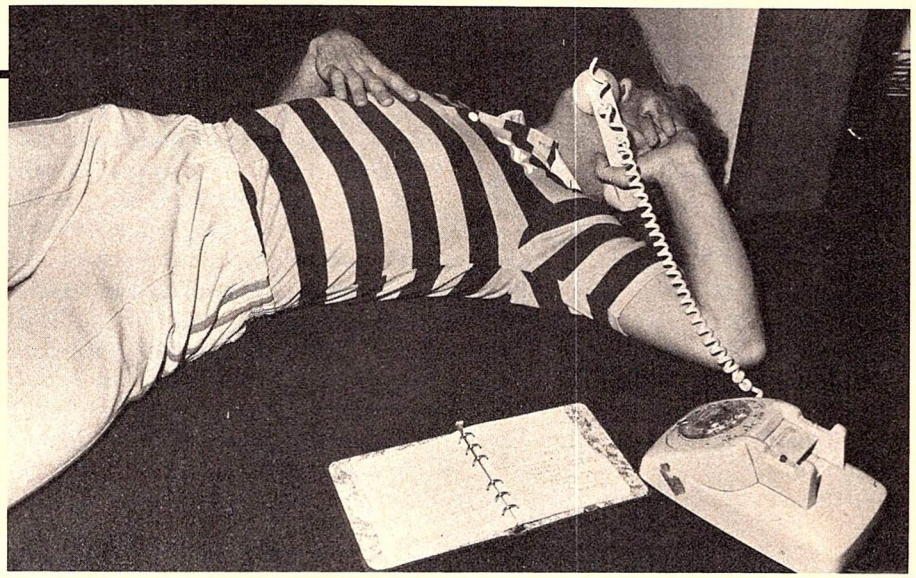
Part of the program is running on the beach.



Working the weight machines at Santa Ana's SCAR.

Semics

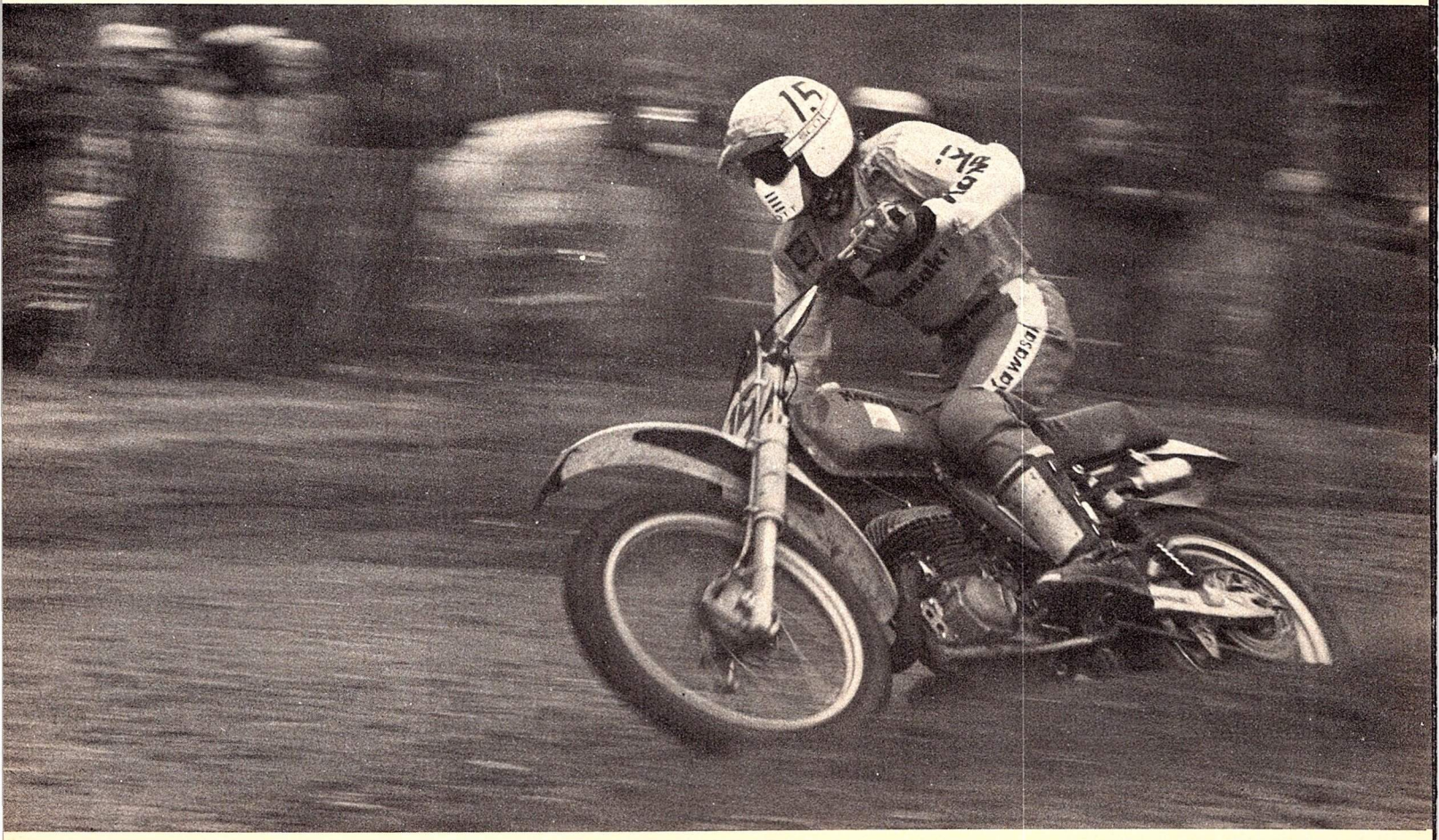
Sometimes when you're racing with another guy and he's just as fast as you are, there may be only two or three places on the track where you can pass him, so you have to be clever and not give those places away, but be ready to go when you get the chance. Sometimes you can fake a guy by making a few tries to pass him on the inside of the turn on a particular turn and then, when he slows down to cover the inside of the turn, hold it wide open and go around him on the outside. But I need to get a little more aggressive. If you get a bad start you might have to bump your way through traffic a little and make somebody a little unhappy, but that's just what you have to do. If you take your time too much and try to set everybody up to pass them clean, then the riders who got the good starts will be too far gone to catch. This kind of experience is part of what you pick up after a few years of racing, and now I think I'm getting to the point where I'm beginning to learn some of these things."



"During the season, socializing gets crazy."

Then he brought up his strong point: Starts.

"It's hard to pinpoint any single factor in getting good starts. I watch the gate very closely at the start of the Support races to see how it goes down and then I try to time my starts the same way. As soon as I see the card start to go sideways, I look at the gate. After that it's all reflexes. When the gate moves, I take off. I put my left foot under the shifter and my right foot on the ground so I can make a fast shift right off the line. If the soil is loose or slippery I'll sit at the front of the seat, but if there's good traction (and there usually is) I'll sit up on the gas tank and put as much weight as I can on my arms so I can push the front end down. I give it full throttle off the line and slip the clutch just enough



to get as much traction as possible so I can get straight on out of there. After that I use my body weight to get the best traction.

"Sometimes sitting on the line before the start I'll get a little scared thinking about what's going to happen in the first turn or something, and my heart will start beating and I'll get nervous. When that happens I'll just take a few deep breaths and try to calm down and not worry about anything, because it's very important to be completely relaxed at the start. If you're tense you won't get a good start because the right flow won't happen. But boy, I'll tell ya, when that card goes sideways and that gate goes down, your mind goes completely blank and you're not realizing anything that's happening around you. Sometimes I get into such a zone of concentration that I feel like I'm not even there, but watching the start from some other place. It's really strange."

"Some people like to get high smoking or drinking, but on race day I'm just as high as I can be and it's all natural."

We talked about mental attitude and how he sets up his head for a big race.

"I like to feel good when I go out for the race. Sunday mornings I don't like to get myself worrying about anything, I just want to concentrate on the race and keep the rest of the day simple. Some people like to get high smoking or drinking, but when I go out for a race on Sunday morning, I'm just as high as I can feel. And it's all natural.

"Like at the Puyallup Trans-AMA when I won the second moto. That's one of the best feelings I've ever had. I was out there and had the track wired and my heart was pumping and I was getting adrenalin rushes and at the same time I was winning the race. It's the best feeling in the world, knowing you're accomplishing something and feeling that good at the same time. Of course it's important to *always* feel like that when you're racing. Like most of the time I'll feel good if I can get the track wired and I know I'm putting out 100 percent and not holding anything back and everything is flowing. It doesn't matter if I'm in first place or eighth place . . . but it feels better when I'm in first place."

Photo by Marcia Holley

Gary Semics

We asked Gary how he felt about the stadium races.

"The big problem with indoor races is that there's no room. In the outdoor races you have plenty of room to maneuver. You can see things coming and you've got time to make corrections and get around other riders when they make mistakes. But in the supercross stuff, the tracks are so narrow that if something happens in front of you, you've got no place to go and you crash right into it. Usually if you crash at a regular race it's almost always your own fault, but you could get taken out of a stadium race without ever knowing where it came from or who did it. You can be doing the right thing and somebody else can cause you to crash. I've been hurt that way in a couple of indoor races and that's why I don't like them. They scare me.

"It doesn't matter if I'm in first place or eighth place . . . but it feels better when I'm in first place."

"I didn't race the Anaheim race and I'm glad I didn't. But I was up in the stands and I could see the whole thing, and half the people there didn't know what was going on. They were just there for something to do. Just watching from the stands, it looked easy. You couldn't tell what kind of an athlete you had to be to do it or how skilled you had to be to get around fast without making any mistakes or what a great rider Marty Smith was to win it. But when they saw somebody crash real bad, that was the most exciting thing that happened to them all night, seeing somebody get hurt. I don't know about these other motocross riders, but that's not what I want to do. That's just a circus act."

We wondered, because of the popularity of stadium racing, what the future of motocross would be in the United States and how it would affect the racing in Europe.

"I don't know where motocross is going in Europe because I haven't been there yet, but from what I see in the United States, it's turning into a sideshow. Everyone's getting money-hungry and trying to make it

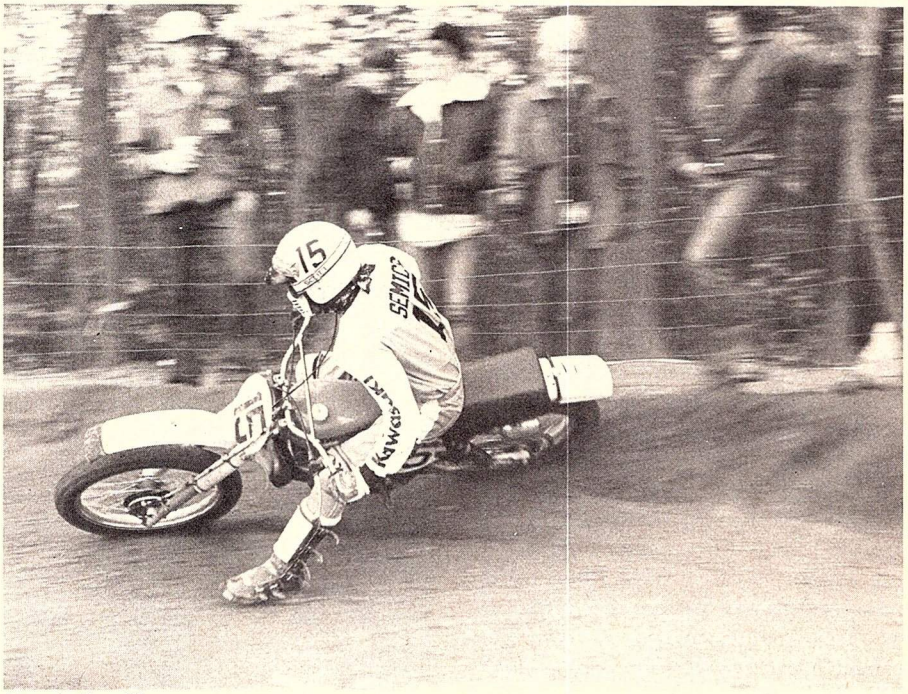
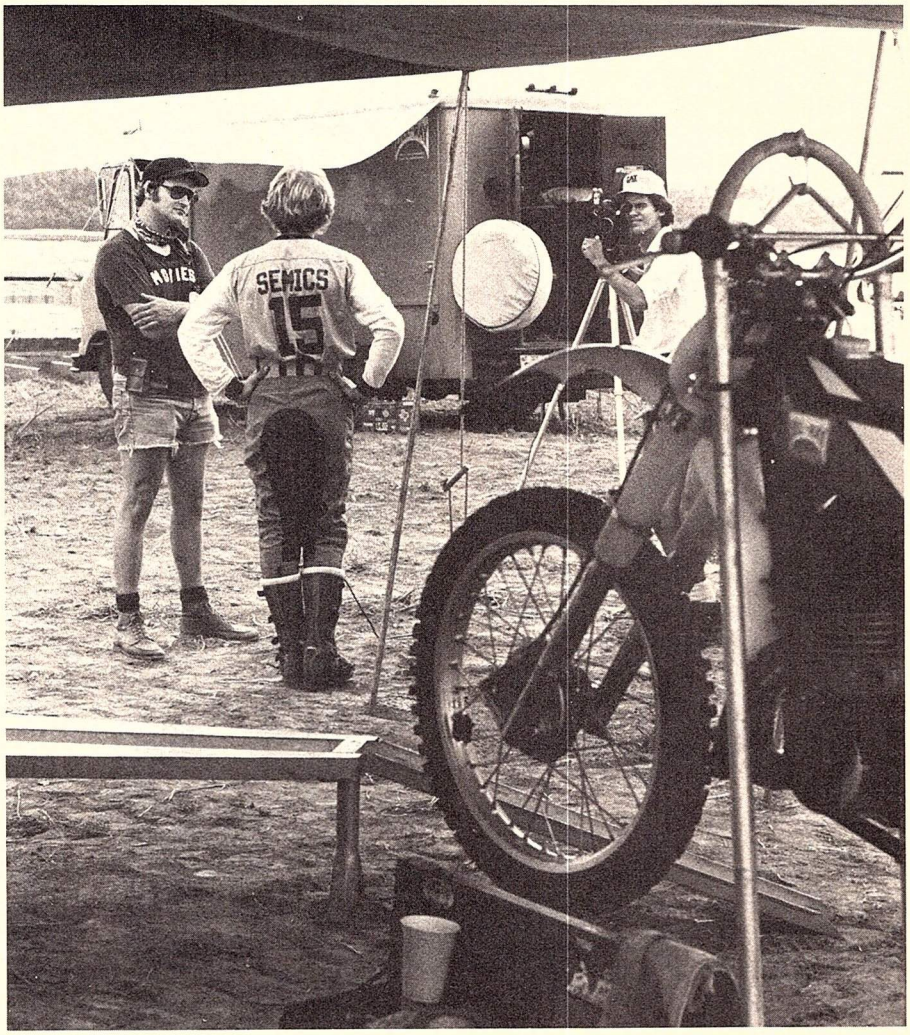


Photo by Tom Riles

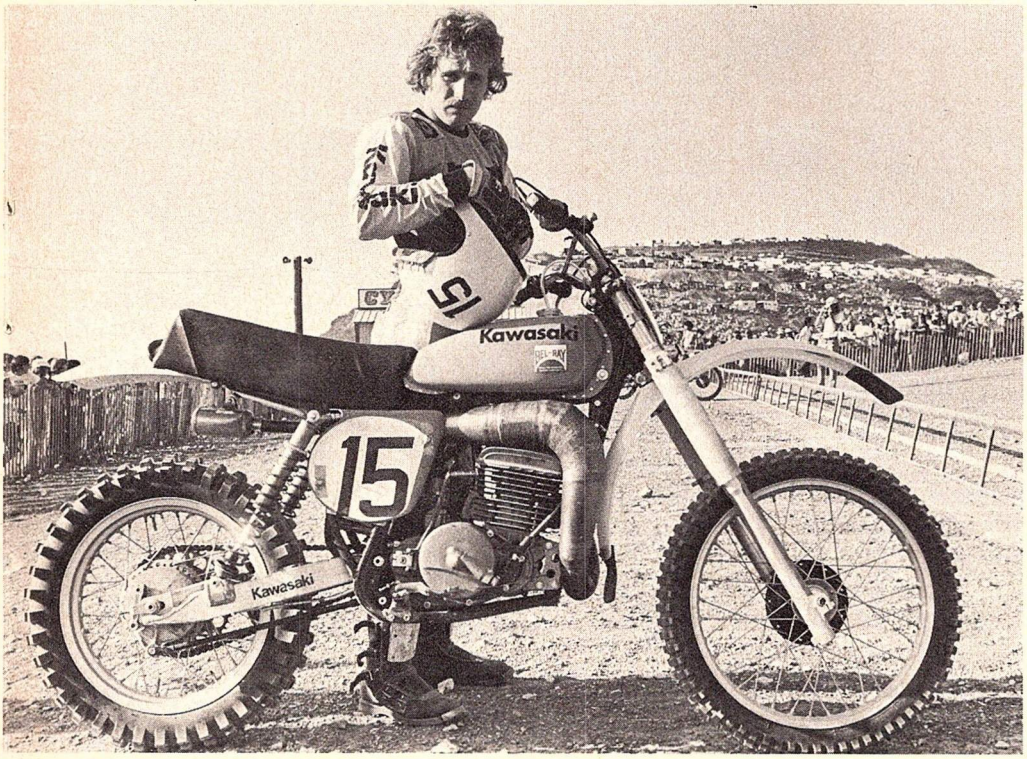


Gary spends part of his time doing public relations work for his sponsor, Kawasaki.

big all of a sudden. I think it's got to grow slowly and do its own thing. If everything goes right and we do everything right, then I can't see why people wouldn't be interested in it and want to go see it. Stadium motocross is all right just to show the people so they can get an idea of what it's like, but the way things are looking now, motocross may just turn into an indoor sport. That's what a lot of the big promoters want, and the big promoters have a lot of power. The AMA doesn't care which way it goes. They'll stay in the fields or go indoors, they don't really care that much.

"Our biggest problem in the United States is the tracks. We use the same ones every year and anyone who knows anything about motocross knows that after you use a track a few times and the sod gets torn off and the rocks start coming up, it gets a mess and is no good to ride on anymore. In Europe they have people to go around and when they see some nice terrain they find out who owns it and make arrangements with the owner to set a date for a motocross. The promoters in this country are so money-hungry they don't even look at the track. They just want more money. If we really want people to see the beauty of motocross, we have to have good tracks because that's where it happens. There are exceptions, like Unadilla, New York, but that's only one track and you need many more to make a difference.

Photo by Jim Gianatsis



"I don't know where motocross is going in Europe but from what I see in the United States, it's turning into a sideshow."

"We need to get on national television. That's what they do in Europe and there's where it's really big. If we could get on TV in this country, motocross would be just like football. But that brings us back

Continued on page 70

trans-ama

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL...

Chasing glory in the minor leagues

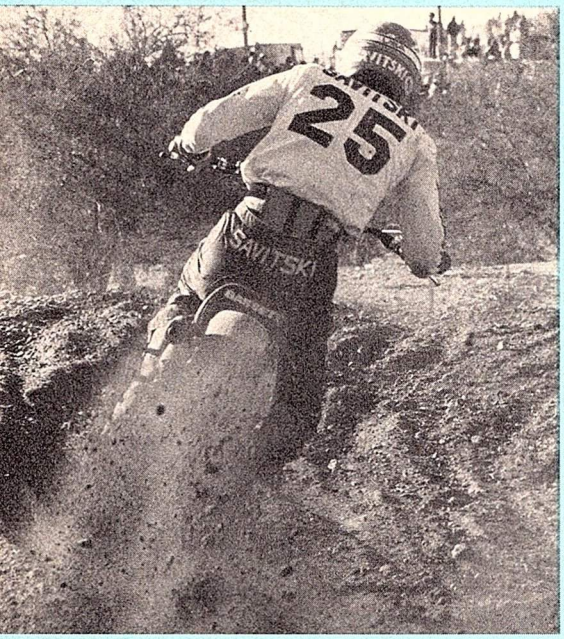
By Jody Weisel

Ethics and morals are the first victims of a competitive marketplace and there is nothing more competitive than the big-bucks world of prestige motocross racing. If Roger DeCoster's 1976 Trans-AMA sweep will sell a million motorcycles for U.S. Suzuki, then what will self half a million? Why, a win in the Trans-AMA Support class, of course. Support classes have long been the victim of factory poaching, when a major manufacturer slips in a couple of ringers, in order to garner the added publicity. The most renowned case was Husqvarna signing a reluctant Kent Howerton up for the Support class at the USGP. The objective was to guarantee a win and advertising copy. The ringers have always demolished their less experienced, less well supplied with equipment and less talented Support class opposition, but the 1976 Trans-AMA Support class was *almost* different.

You don't need a scorecard to identify the poachers. They are the riders with the white number plates and the names that are readily recognized: Jimmy Ellis and Rich Eierstedt. The Support class was intended to give young local riders a chance to gain experience and earn some money until they are ready for the big leagues. It is minor league. It is training camp. It is no place for major league talent like 1975-76 Superbowl winner Jimmy Ellis, who won the Trans-AMA Support class title in 1975. It is no place for Team Honda rider Rich Eierstedt who won the title back in 1973 for the first time. Ellis and Eierstedt do what they are told by their factory reps, but both have the talent to be in the big leagues (and both have big-bore equipment available to them).

The shocker of the '76 Support show was that the privateers didn't buckle under the factory foraging, but kicked out the jams and emerged as underdog stars.

Danny LaPorte has factory support in the form of Team Suzuki and moral support in the guise of adopted guardian Roger DeCoster, but he is in his first full year on the National circuit and carries the unlikely National number of 352. LaPorte, 19, carried the Suzuki banner into the fray and came out in second place overall. Going into the final round in Phoenix, LaPorte had a shot at the overall series win. Riding like a man possessed, he put



John Savitski began to show his potential this year after a switch from European brands to a Bassett Racing Suzuki. Savitski and mechanic Bevo Forte have been finishing high in the standings thanks to riding like this rocky roost in Phoenix.

Smooth-riding Chuck Sun (661) leads Warren Reid (20), Steve Wise (14) and Jimmy Ellis (10) over a grassy stretch of Sears Point terrain. Pacific Northwestern Chuck Sun will inherit Brad Lackey's Husky ride.

Photos by Paul Boudreau

OPPOSITE PAGE: Overall Trans-AMA Support Class winner Rich Eierstedt powered his factory RC Honda to victory in the decisive final event at Phoenix.

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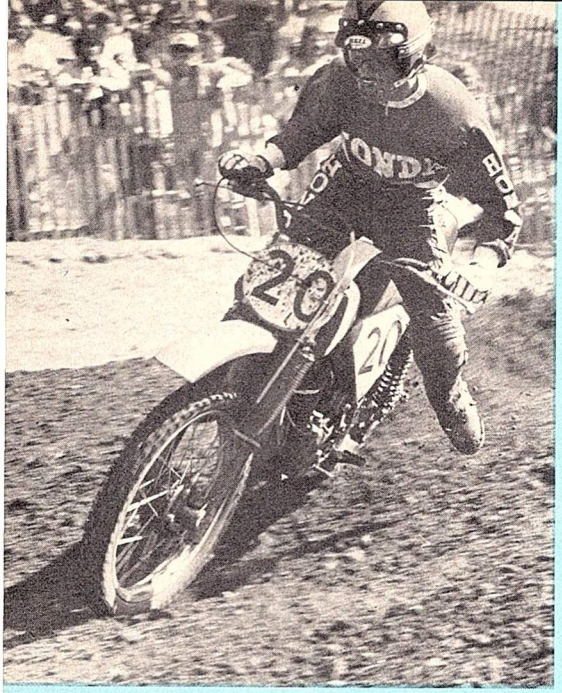
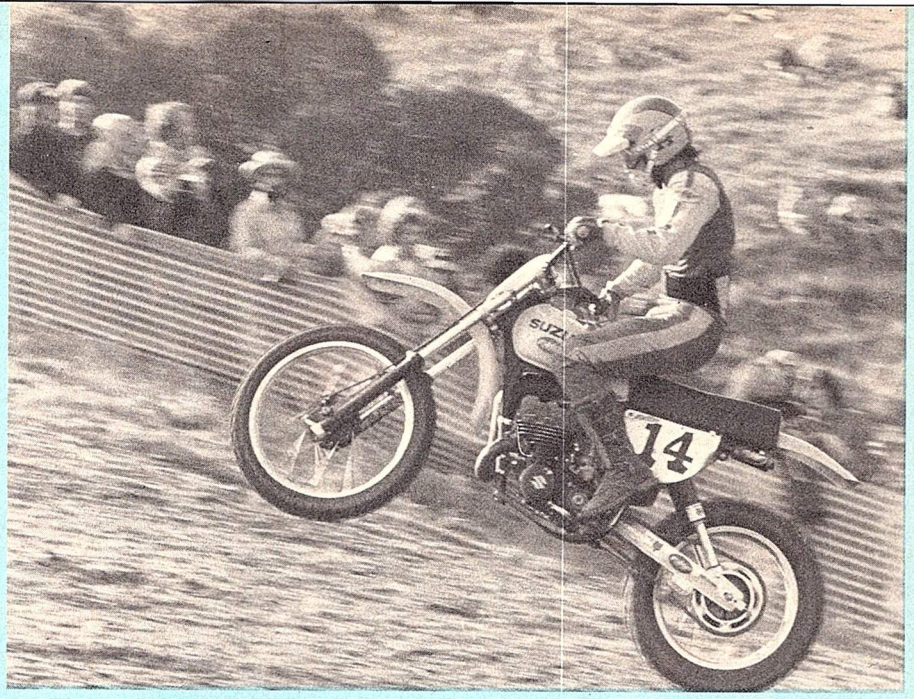


Factory rides can be won by hard riding as Warren Reid proved by coming on strong during the West Coast rounds of the Trans-AMA to earn a fire fighter's suit with Team Honda.



Known as the other Texan, after Howerton and Stackable, Steve Wise started smoking in the last five rounds to make the top ten Support class standings with only half as many rides. Note that LTR by FMF.

up a gallant struggle, but ended the day and the Trans-AMA with second place. LaPorte was a young novice professional who came into his own in a closely matched field. Next year he'll be riding against mentor DeCoster in the International class.

Atlas, Pennsylvania's John Savitski has been around for several years chasing the big balloon, but it has always escaped him. With the aid of Bassett Racing Products Savitski prepared a 250 Suzuki and made his most creditable run for the top spot. Savitski started 1976 by leaving his partially sponsored Bultaco ride, then losing a Team Maico ride, only to end up riding a private Suzuki to third place in the Trans-AMA standings. The factories are looking at him again and a few are shaking their heads about having lost him in the first place.

Chuck Sun is a dedicated Husky privateer who served his apprenticeship in the moist Oregon sunshine. In 1975 Sun rode his first Trans-AMA. The unusual thing about it was that he rode in the International class. Nobody knew who he was or where he came from, but for an unknown entity he turned in outstanding performances and became a topic of discussion at team meetings. Sun never broke the top ten in the big leagues, so in 1976 he came back to serve his apprenticeship in the Support ranks. Up front was where Sun wanted to be and that was where he was every week. Hardly a race went by that Chuck Sun didn't lead, and although the big win escaped him he was impressive enough to take a high overall placing and earn factory support from Sweden.

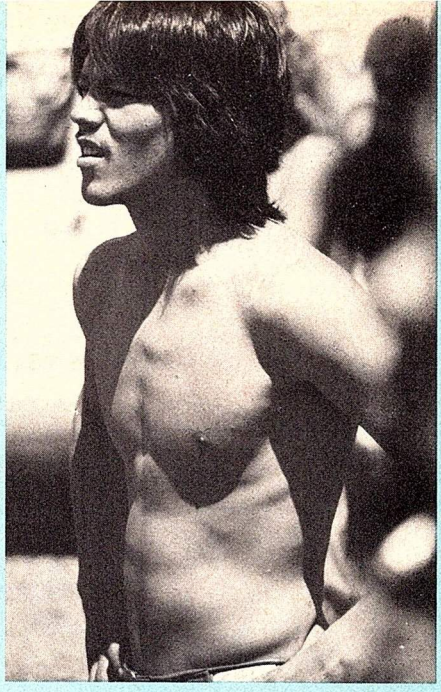
Warren Reid has always been the marginal man at Team Honda. One week he is on the team and the next week he is off. His father is Marty Smith's Grand Prix mechanic and this guarantees Reid the best equipment, with or without factory help. Warren Reid saved his Trans-AMA fireworks for the last four rounds at Saddleback, Puyallup, Sears Point and Phoenix. Coming on like gangbusters in the tightest racing possible, Reid kept himself in the top five and moved in at the end to win motos. On the primo Sears Point natural grass course Reid took the overall in a five-man tussle that made the International class look pale. For Reid's efforts on the Trans-AMA he has been awarded the "Order of Type 2" from Honda and will ride for the team this year.

Missing the first few rounds put Texan Steve Wise at a disadvantage in the points run, but his riding was flawless from the beginning. In his home state round at Rabbit Run MX Park, he finished close behind Montesa team rider Mickey Kessler for second place. At Sears Point Wise holeshot both motos and led more than halfway through both races before having suspension problems. Steve Wise was the only non-factory rider to win a National in 1976 and remains the hottest unattached rider in America.

And what of the former Trans-AMA Support class winners Eierstedt and Ellis? Can-Am's Jimmy Ellis started out predictably on what everyone expected to be a rout. Can-Am doesn't make a competitive open class bike, and rather than lose the International class they prefer to win the Support class. But the unexpected in the form of an automobile accident, breaking Ellis's wrist, opened the field up for someone else to win. Unequivocally Ellis would have slaughtered the 1976 Support class except for the fact that he's a better rider than driver.

And the field was opened up for Honda's Rich Eierstedt to win his second Support class title in four years. Eierstedt deserved his win because those brash minor leaguers turned in big league performances against him. The AMA has begun to kick around a plan to keep poachers from riding out of their league. And it is a good thing, because it might save one of them the embarrassment of losing.

In his first year with the big guns Team Suzuki's Danny LaPorte won two 125 Nationals and two Trans-AMA Support classes. LaPorte finished second in the standings after ten races of muck and mire.



For all of you who keep hounding us for more skin — we present Chuck Sun.

John Savitski (25) tucked his off-the-shelf RM in behind Rich Eierstedt's works Honda at the final round in Phoenix and couldn't be shook. Their lines were different, but the distances never varied.

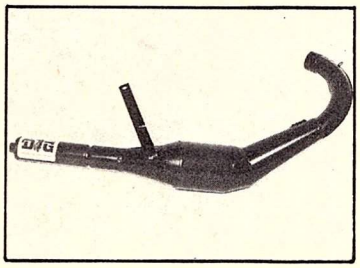
Two-time Support class title winner Rich Eierstedt normally is alone when the gate drops, but Chuck Sun powers out with the Team Honda rider in a dead heat.

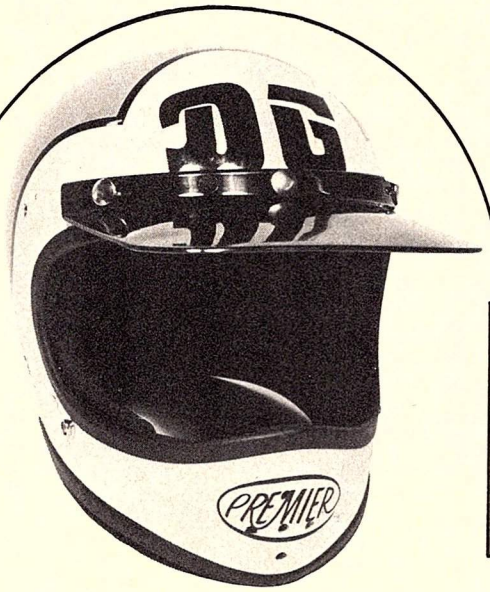
Amazingly enough the fastest man at the Saddleback Trans-AMA, and the farthest flying, was Jeff Jennings. Lap times don't tell the whole story, but Jennings won the second moto.

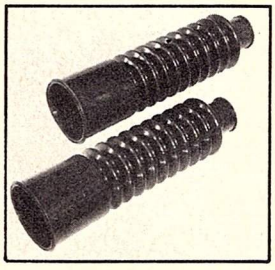
1976 FINAL STANDINGS
250cc TRANS-AMA SUPPORT CLASS

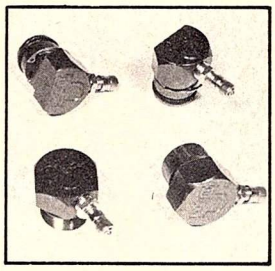
Pos.	Name, hometown	Points
1.	Rich Eierstedt, Norwalk, CA	340
2.	Danny LaPorte, Yucca Valley, CA	317
3.	Chuck Sun, Sherwood, OR	288
4.	John Savitski, Atlas, PA	277
5.	Frank Stacy, Cheektowaga, NY	215
6.	Mike Runyard, Hacienda Heights, CA	188
7.	Steve Wise, McAllen, TX	170
8.	Warren Reid, Westminster, CA	153
9.	Jimmy Ellis, East Hampton, CT	146
10.	Denny Swartz, Reno, OH	140

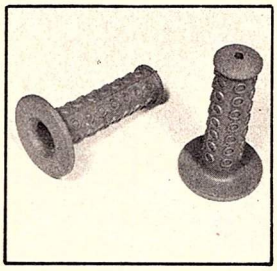
Triple "C" Products

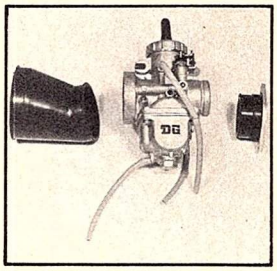












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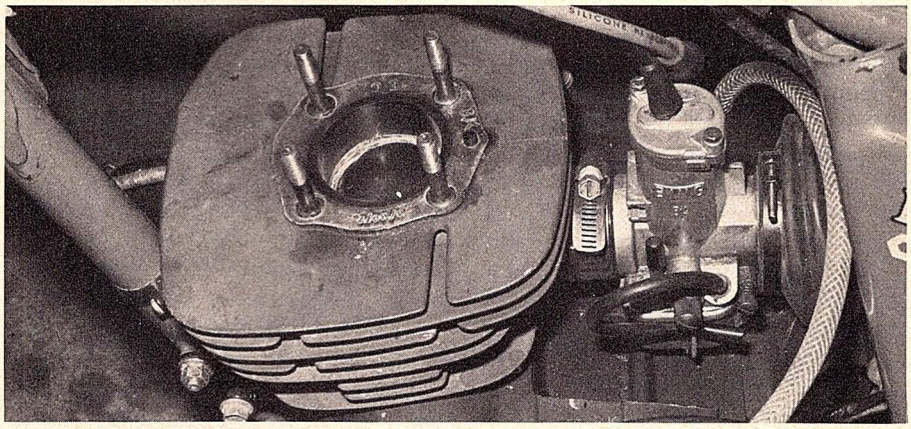
Complete Details in 1977 DG Catalog.

HOW TO CHECK YOUR CYLINDER HEAD

Part 2: Determining correct compression ratio

By E.C. Birt



Remove the head and bring the piston up to where the exhaust port just closes. Then seal the edge of the piston with grease.

If you'll remember, last month I told you how to measure the various clearances between the top of the piston and the bottom of the cylinder head to determine the deck height, or the space between the piston and head at top dead center. Then I showed you how to make adjustments to arrive at the proper deck height.

Now with the deck height of your engine set at what it's supposed to be, we are ready to figure out what the compression ratio of your engine is and what to do about it.

Compression ratios are figured in two different ways.

(1) Total volume of the engine. This is where some of the factories try to dazzle you with big numbers. These big compression numbers fall into the region of 12 to 1 and 13 to 1. Anywhere up in these big numbers, you will know that they are talking about the whole cylinder from BDC to TDC. This is not what makes the motor run. What does is (2) the honest compression ratio. This honest compression ratio starts when the exhaust port closes. You can see right quick there is a big difference. The horsepower your motor puts out starts at this point.

The tools you need to figure out your compression ratio are as follows: a quart of cleaning solvent, some grease, a small clear plastic plate with a hole in the center, and something that will measure cc's for you. I use a burette, which can be picked up at any drug supply place. A lot of the drugstores carry throwaway syringes that you can buy cheap. A piece of paper and a pencil round out the rest of the things that you will need.

Remove the gas tank from your motorcycle, then remove the spark plug.

Next, remove the cylinder head from your motor. With the head off, set the top edge of your piston right at the point where the exhaust port is just closed. Take your grease and, using a small brush, paint grease around the edge of the piston so that it will make a seal. Be sure that you wipe off the excess grease. All you want in there is just enough to make a seal so your solvent won't seep by the edge of the piston.

You are now ready to replace the head and torque it back down just as if you were going back out riding. With your burette, or whatever, fill the cylinder up with solvent till it just comes to the bottom of the

Bolt on the head and add a full measure of solvent through the plug hole. Record the amount it takes.

Circle 11 on page 73

HOW TO CHECK YOUR CYLINDER HEAD

thread holes. Record the amount of solvent that it took to fill the cylinder. Remove the head from the engine again, and set the piston at TDC (use your dial indicator). Break out the grease one more time and seal the edge of the piston at the cylinder bore surface. Be sure to remove any excess grease. Replace the head and torque it back down. With your burette, fill the head up with solvent again, just to the bottom of the spark plug threads. Record the amount on your paper.

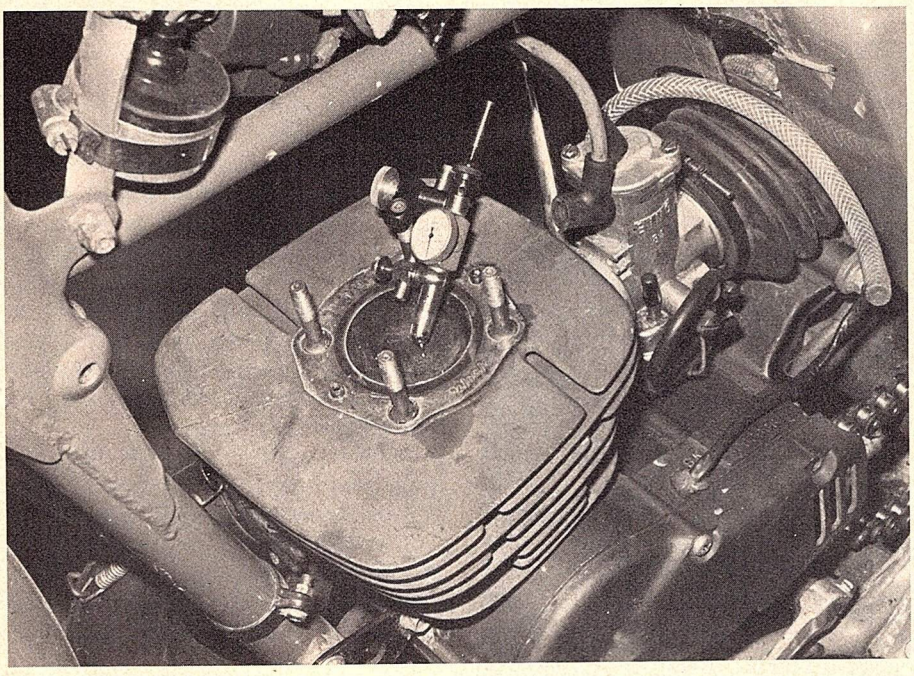
Remove your head one more time. Put your spark plug back in the plug hole and turn the head upside down. With your grease, paint a surface on the head. Next take your plastic plate and press it firmly to the cylinder head surface with the hole you drilled in it right over the spark plug. With your burette, cc the head and write this volume on your paper. Fill the head up just until the solvent comes to the bottom of the hole in your plastic plate.

To find out what your honest compression ratio is, take the volume measured when the piston was at TDC and divide it into the volume measured when the piston was just closing the exhaust port. Dividing the top into the bottom gives you your honest compression ratio.

In Part One, I pointed out that most of the accessory head manufacturers make their heads very close to stock as far as compression ratio and deck height to avoid problems. When you had your cylinder ported, the exhaust port was probably raised and your honest compression ratio was lowered, and what you thought you gained in horsepower through porting was lost because the compression ratio was lower than stock from the factory.

With my Honda, the cylinder cc's out at 68.8 because of where I have the exhaust port. Volume with the piston at TDC is 10cc. This gives me an honest compression ratio of 10.0 divided by 68.8, which equals a 6.88 to 1 honest compression ratio. The Shinobi water-cooled head cc's out at 13.4cc, which is 0.1 under stock. Stock compression ratio on the CR125M, just like it comes out of the box, runs right at 7.2 — 7.5 to 1 honest compression ratio. So you can see that at 6.88, I lowered the compression ratio. With this ratio, it will pump water forever, but it wouldn't do much on the racetrack.

What's the best compression ratio for your motor? Well, it's like anything else that you do to a two-stroke motor. Go in slow and easy steps, and be ready for a surprise if you go overboard. Small-displacement engines, like up to 125cc, can run up to 8.0 — 8.5 to 1 without too much problem. Large-displacement engines of 250cc and over can only use very high compression ratios for a very short time. Somewhere in the range of 6.0 — 7.0 to 1 would be a good place to start. If you are racing where elevations are in the 3000-foot and up range, you can run a little higher compression ratio than you would at sea level, because of the lower air density at higher altitudes. In the case of short-trackers, half-milers and road racers, most of the time you will run lower compression ratios than you would for a motocrosser or TT bike. It all boils down to the fact that you can, and will, get more horsepower with



Remove the head and set the piston at top dead center. Reseal the piston with grease.

Bolt the head back on and add a full measure of solvent. Record the amount it takes.

Remove the cylinder head, replace the spark plug, and put a thin coating of grease on the mating surface.

Cover with the plastic plate and fill the combustion chamber with solvent. Record the amount it takes. Simple arithmetic determines your correct compression ratio.

higher compression ratios. But if the compression ratio is too high, you will come out on the short end of the stick.

How do you tell if your compression ratio is too high? There are a few telltale signs that let you know. (1) Your motor knocks like your van does on cheap gas. (2) Your engine has torque like a 501 Maico, but goes flat on top end. (3) Your engine runs hotter than a $25 RM250 Suzuki. (4) When you pull the head off, you find that the mice have been having a field day with the edge of your piston, and the outer edge of the head has more holes in it than a politician's speech.

The biggest thing that will control how much compression your engine can run is how cool the engine runs. Engines with big fins on the cylinder and head and a lot of cooling surface will let you run higher compression ratios than engines with less finning.

With one of my own Radial Heads, I know that I can, and do, run anywhere from 8.0 — 9.0 to 1 compression ratios here in the Florida sand, where it's hotter than where you hope you ain't going when your number is called.

The Shinobi water-cooled head has opened up a whole new ball-game for the two-stroke engine. This is my ace in the hole, and as you can see, with higher compression ratios, you can also get more horsepower. With the Shinobi water-cooled head, the heating problems that we have with free air engines are brought under control.

With the water-cooled head, there should be no reason why you couldn't push the compression ratio for most small-bore engines up to around 9.5 — 10 to 1. You could push that ratio even higher than that, but it would be a waste of time — because with much more compression than 10 to 1, the rings won't hold it back. The blow-by that you would get into the lower end would wind up costing you horse-power.

Are there any drawbacks in running these higher compression ratios? Yes. Anytime you dance, you have to pay the fiddler. The trick of water-cooling will let you run this higher compression ratio, and the cooling factor will keep you running strong all the way through the day of racing. The engine won't have the "pingies" if your tune is spot-on. The lower end in your engine, because of the added horsepower that you have stacked in, will take more of a beating than it did before. Bearings and seals will have to be checked and replaced more often.

One thing for sure, you could set the honest compression ratio at 8.5 to 1, bore the cylinder .005 tighter than you have, keep that right wrist WFO for the full moto, and you won't have to worry about that touch more horsepower that you would have had with higher compression.

Remember the old bedtime story. The turtle beat the hare because he used his head and had the desire to win. Not because he was fastest.

trick

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Circle 12 on page 73

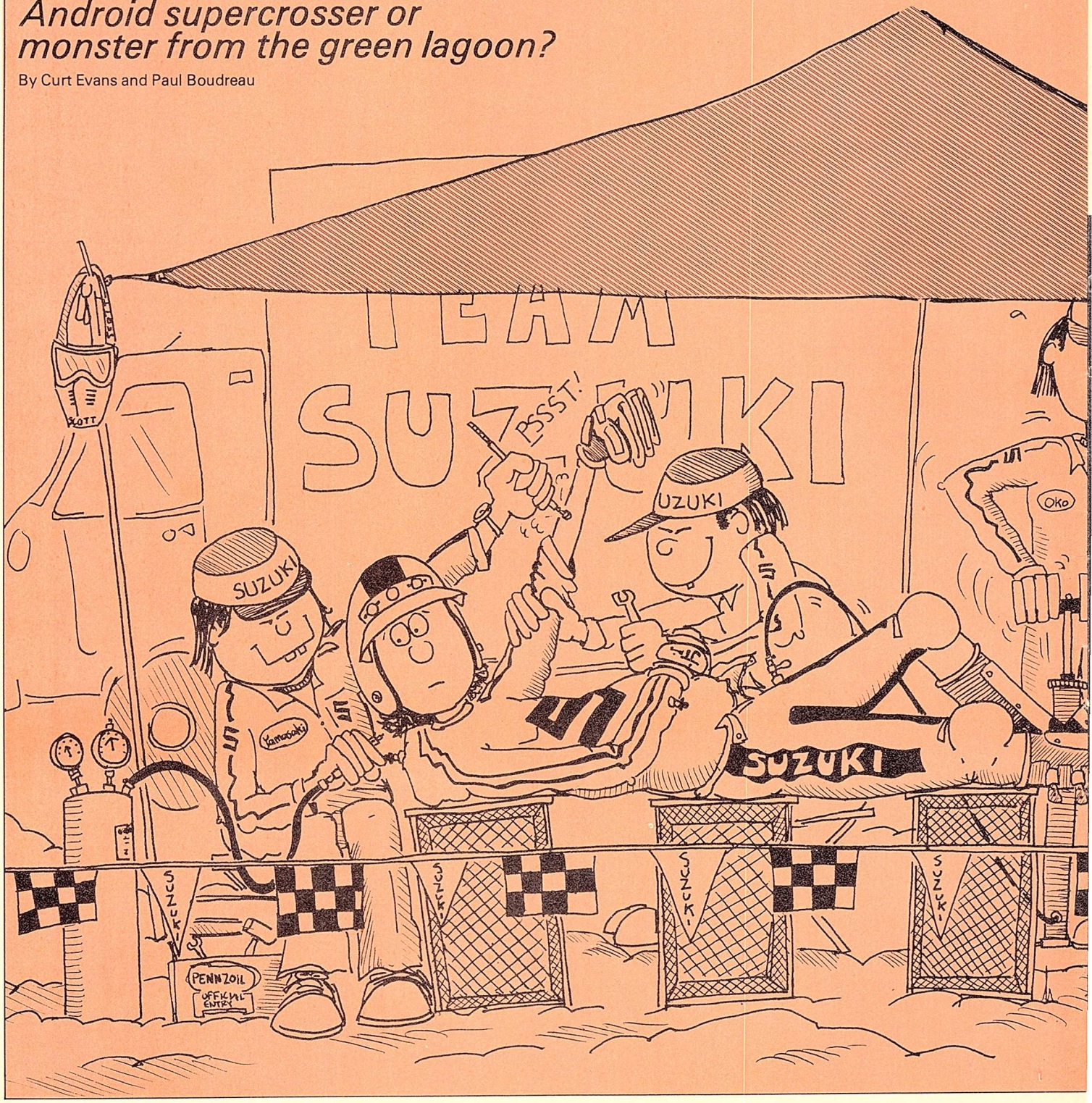
body technology

A PREVIEW OF THE BIONIC MOTOCROSSER

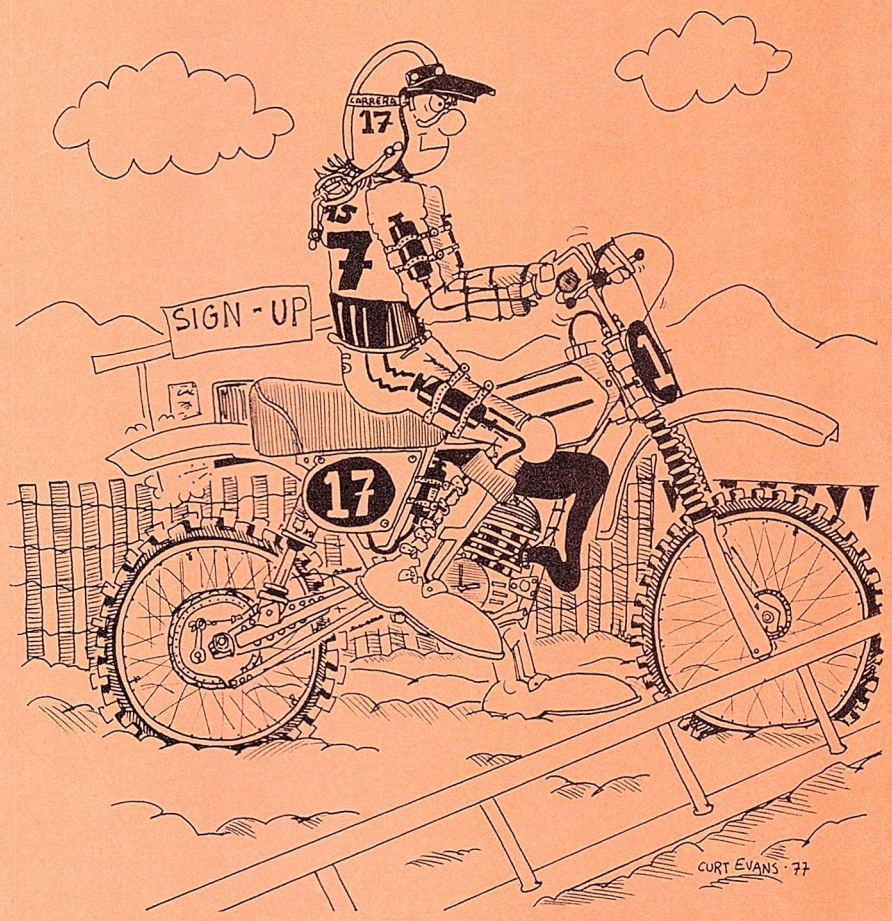
Android supercrosser or monster from the green lagoon?

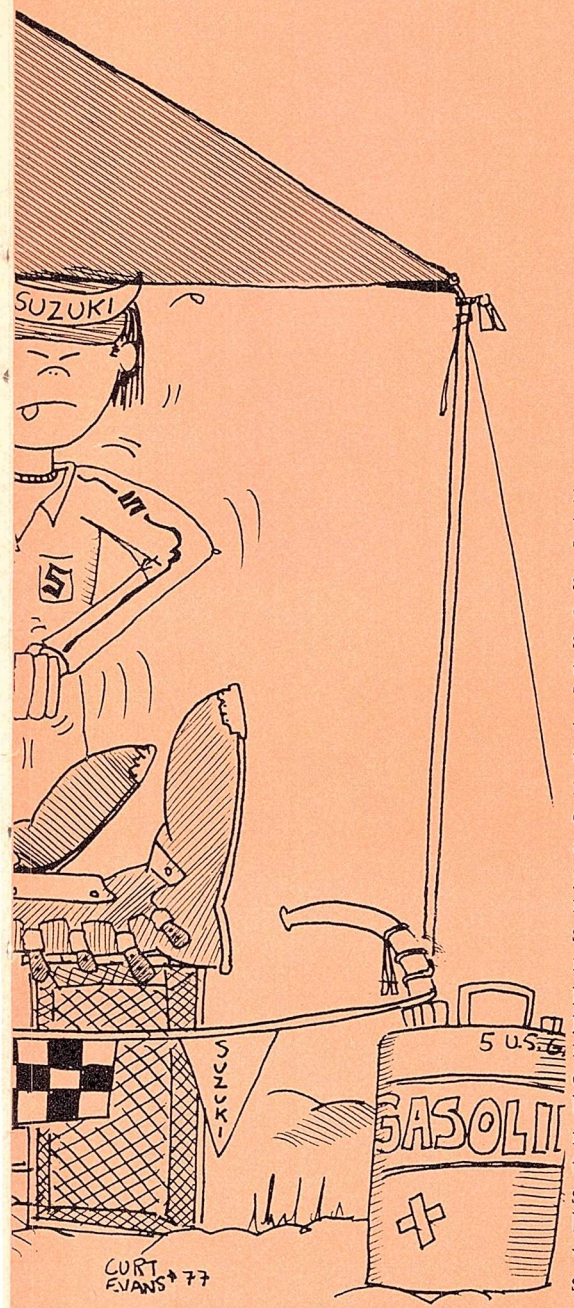
By Curt Evans and Paul Boudreau

Faster and faster the technological advancements of motocross machinery increase day by day, making today's latest equipment obsolete tomorrow. As we near the limits of mechanical perfection, however, technicians will turn more and more to the rider himself for ways of improving the total output of the combination of man and his



motorcycle. MOTOCROSS ACTION, of course, is keeping abreast of these advancements, and we'd like to show you now some of the changes that will be seen in motocross technology over the coming years as the idea of the bionic motocrosser comes closer to reality.





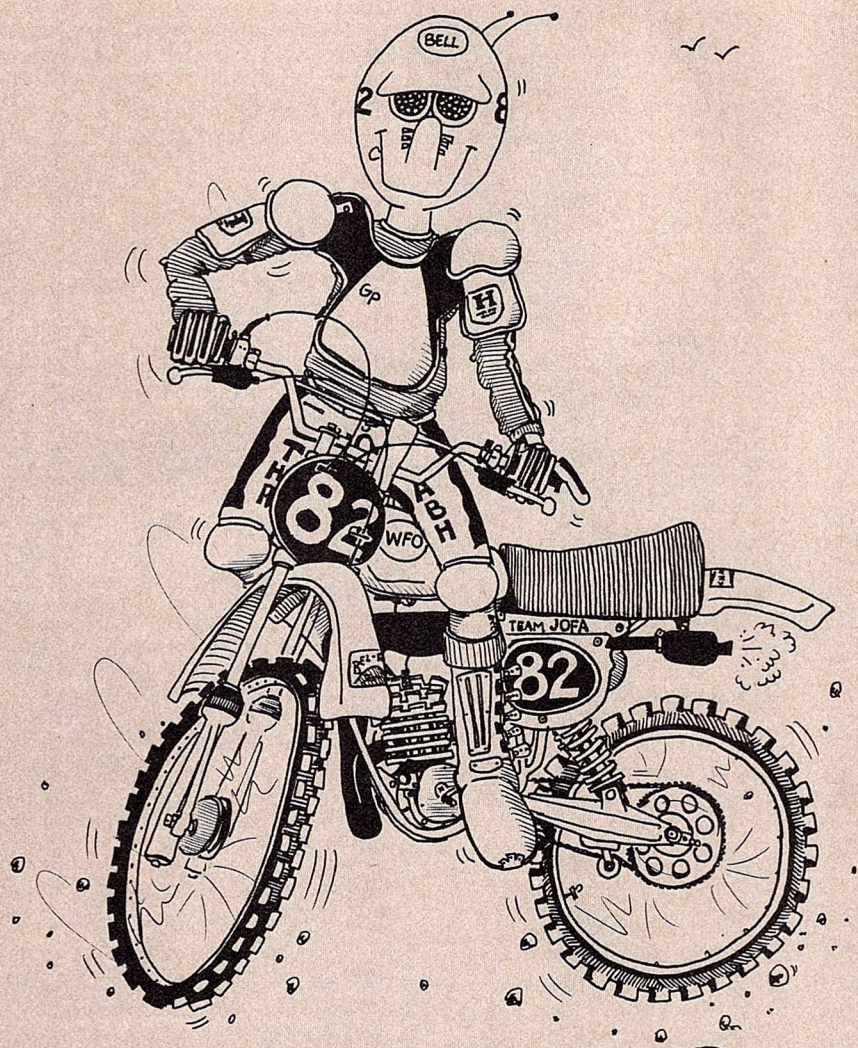
BIONIC SUSPENSION

The first signal indicating that a rider is losing his endurance is weakness in the arms or legs. Toward the end of a long moto as strength ebbs from his body, he'll drop his elbows, sit down in the saddle more and tend to hold a less than firm grip on the handlebars. This is when the rider is most vulnerable to fatigue and, if he tries to maintain his pace, crashes often result. Future technology will, of course, change all that. A system of air pressure bladders, pneumatic jacks and valves will be built into the racer's arms and legs to maintain strength and suppleness during long motos regardless of the rider's physical conditioning. Simple adjustments will be made to tune the rider's extremities to course conditions, but the use of occasional boosts of nitrous oxide to increase rider performance will be banned by the AMA. Already there has been some testing of a prototype air arm, but problems have been encountered with pressure leaking past the elbow seal and blowing out the armpit.

REMOTE BLOOD ACCUMULATORS

This is an old trick learned from the Finns — who are rumored to have used the technique to increase the performance of their Olympic long-distance runners and maybe even their motocross world champion. American technology will take the idea one step further and develop a system for pumping up a rider's circulation during the race. Quantities of blood will be taken from the racer in the off-season during a program of high nutrient intake. This supercharged blood will then be condensed and stored in titanium canisters at the appropriate temperature until just before the start of the race. Then the canisters will be attached to the rider and the blood re-instituted into his system during the race. This technique will eliminate the current practice of eating junky things such as candy bars and big globs of honey to charge up the blood. On the other hand, getting the canisters mixed up with a donor pint from some wino in Cleveland might turn the National Champion into the gill monster from the green lagoon.

THE BIONIC MOTOCROSSER

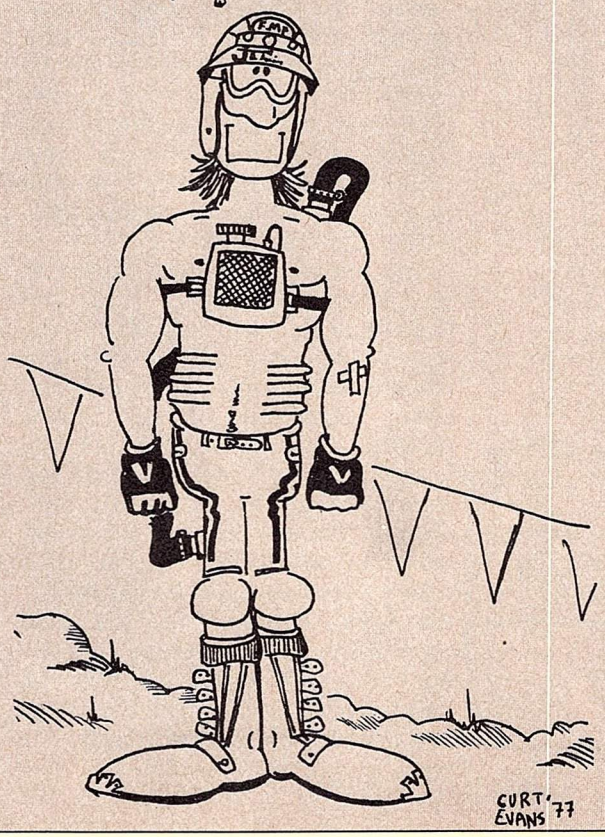


THE GRASSHOPPER ROCK STOPPER

For years the problem of facial protection has plagued the motocross racer. Nothing will slow you down faster than a clod of dirt in the mouth or a blob of mud in your eye. But the future will change all this. No longer will the rider have to wear any protection at all. Instead, a completely pathinogenic, that is to say "home-grown," insect-like head will actually be *grown* in place of the racer's own head. The Grasshopper Rock Stopper will incorporate armor plates to protect the rider from damage by flying debris, and compound eyes will enable him to follow his line precisely while at the same time watching out for other riders and checking out the pit tootsies who stand by the track.

WATER COOLING

Tremendous progress is being made in the development of the water-cooled motocross engine, but in the future the water-cooled motocross rider will make present-day riders obsolete. Using techniques learned in the Grasshopper Rock Stopper program, special hormones will be introduced into the rider's system to initiate the growth of subcutaneous plumbing, and a titanium heat exchanger complete with cooling fins will be implanted in the rider's abdomen. Exterior equipment will include a chest-mounted radiator and hoses to route coolant into the internals. Circulation will automatically be controlled by the rider's breathing. Jerseys and chest protectors will be vented and covered with wire screening to allow air to circulate. Loss of strength due to heat exhaustion will be completely eliminated as long as the system is drained and flushed once a year and antifreeze is added in the winter.



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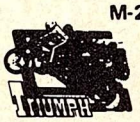

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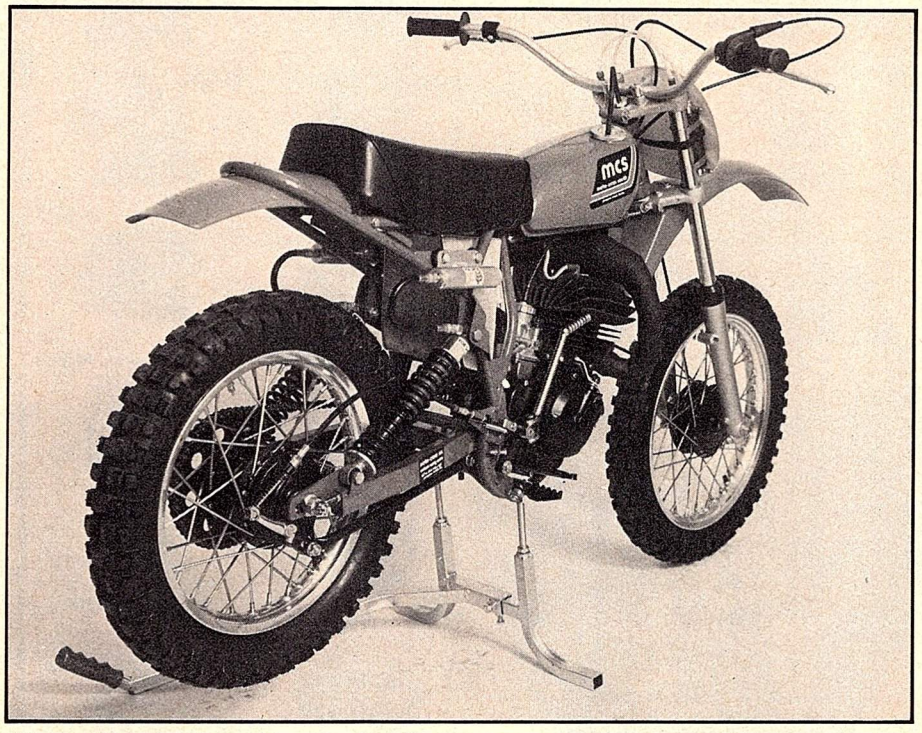
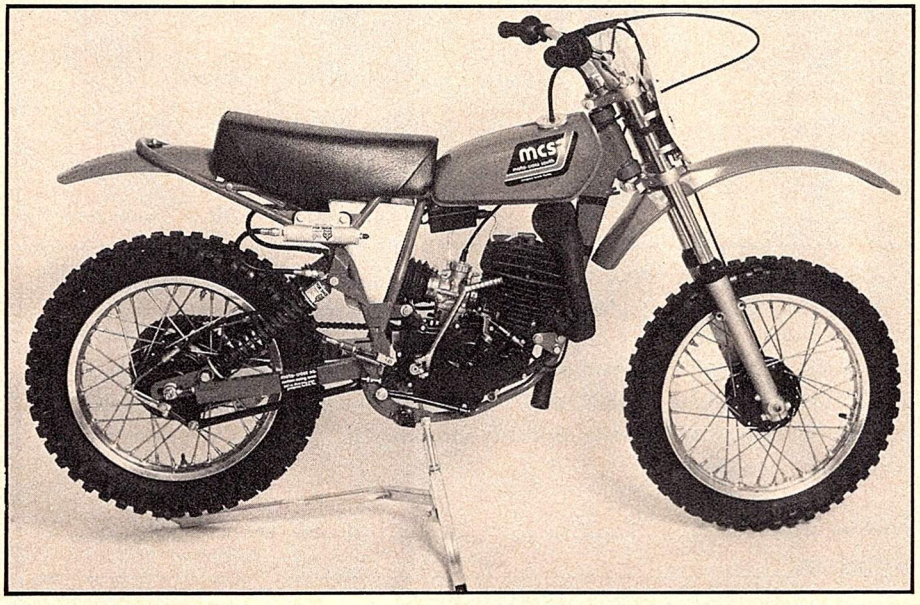
OUTRAGEOUS MINI MAGIC

By E.C. Birt

You'll have to pawn the kid to afford it



100cc mini racing is a wide-open market for the first major manufacturer to jump into it, but until then accessory manufacturers must fill the bill. One look at the MCS 100 Mini Racer and you're convinced.



Ceriani forks, sleeved Elsinore, Mikuni carb, Fox Shox with reservoirs, aluminum air box, Magura grips and quality detailing are offered in the complete package. The hardy and adventuresome can buy the frame kit.

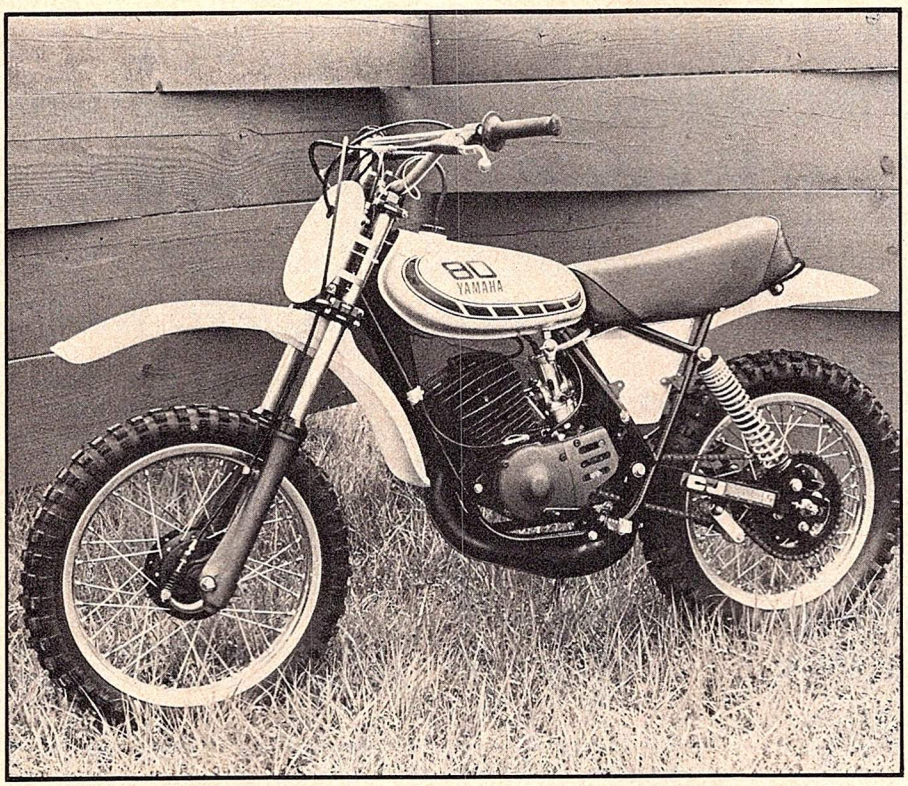
In the past five years, mini-cycles have gone through more changes and upgrading than any other size of motorcycle made. Mini-cycle racing today is a big sport and a big business. A national mini-cycle race will have as many as 2000 entries. Classes start at 50cc Pee Wees and go up to the 100cc class. The last class size in mini-cycle racing is the 100cc class. This class prepares the mini-cycle rider for his graduation to full-size motorcycles.

As of yet, none of the factories make a 100cc machine for the mini class. All of these machines have to be built by the racer himself. For the most part, this size of machine is built around a custom frame with the rest coming from some other motorcycle.

The MCS mini frame has been designed around the same dimensions that it takes for the big bikes to cut the mustard. In short, the MCS mini is a pre-shrunk, drip-dry GP Maico with modified frame to handle better. The construction and workmanship of the MCS frame is a masterpiece of engineering, like a Rembrandt in Red Emron Polyurethane enamel paint (Yamahas come in black). The frame and swingarm are constructed from .058 wall 4130 chrome moly tubing. All welds are heliarc-welded and flawless.

The steering head of an MCS frame is designed to accept sealed tapered Timken roller bearings. At the time of ordering, any bushings or related parts needed to adapt front forks of your choice to the frame are also included.

Each MCS frame kit has been designed with the thought that it will be built at home, and all you will need are the normal tools at hand to assemble your new super mini. Every MCS frame comes with the following parts not found in



It may say Yamaha 80 on the tank but down in the bowels it's a 100. This is for the rider who wouldn't be caught riding a 100 Honda. Although it does use cut-down Elsinore forks.

other frame kits on the market today:

One of the weakest points and trouble spots on most mini frame kits is the swingarm bolt and bushings. The MCS frame has been designed to use a 14mm Maico swingarm bolt and bushings. In short, with a 160-pound mini-cycle, you should never have a swingarm problem. All frame kits come with an alloy still air box. This air box is a reverse air design and it takes only a matter of seconds to change the filter. With the alloy air box, the filter and the carburetor air boot are also supplied. The seat for the MCS frame is also supplied because of modifications that need to be made to the seat for the long rear wheel travel. The seat for the MCS frame is made from a Yamaha YZ80 seat. This seat was chosen because of slim lines and light weight. One other point that is taken into consideration is a chain tensioner; this is a must on just about any racer today and is also supplied with the frame kit. Naturally, all bolts, nuts, motor mounts, brake stay rod and brake pedal are also supplied.

The total cost of the MCS frame kit is $543.48 (F.O.B.) from MCS. This sounds like a lot of money and it is; but take into consideration the needed extras you get with the frame, like an alloy air box that would cost you $75, a seat ($50.54) and a chain tensioner that would set you back another $19.95. Sum it all up and the cost of an MCS frame kit is the best deal in town.

If you want to take the easy way out, MCS will build you the complete racer of your choice containing whatever engine you want.

MCS 100 Mini Racer

Engine	CR125, sleeved to 100cc
Frame w/swingarm weight	22 pounds
Total weight	117 pounds
Seat to ground	31.5 inches
Seat to pegs	20.5 inches
Footpegs to ground	11 inches
Steering rake	28 degrees
Rear wheel travel	6 inches
Front fork travel	7 inches
Overall length	72 inches
Wheelbase	48 inches
Front tire	2.75x17
Rear tire	3.50x16
Cost of frame kit	$543.48

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Circle 13 on page 73

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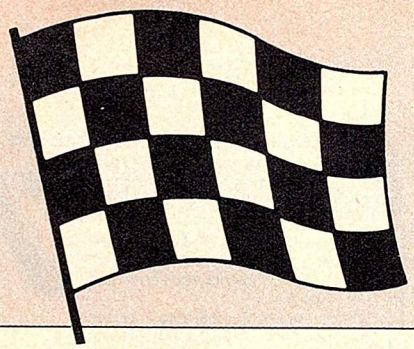

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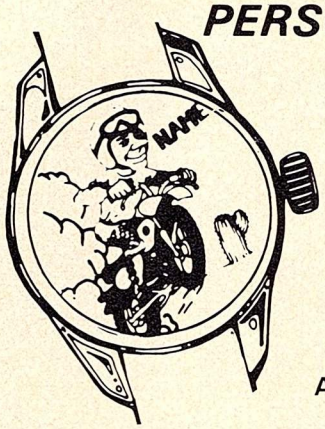

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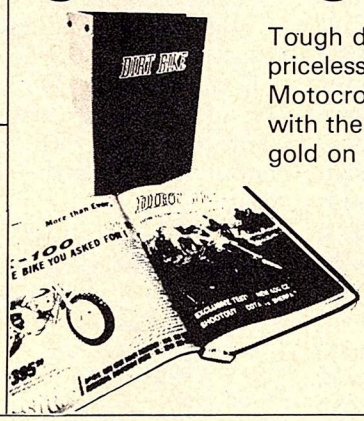

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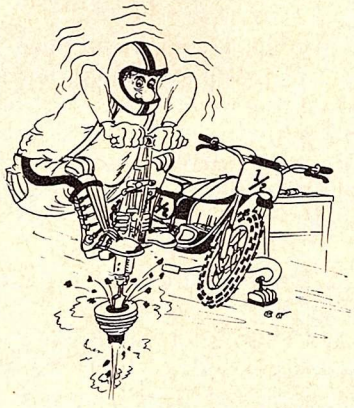

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Circle 16 on page 73

MAIL ENTRIES

Continued from page 9

unqualified to defend this fine fluid in the light of impending criticism from drinkers of Coors, Bud, Schlitz and other stateside hops.

Don is not "drinking beer." In reality, he's "knocking back a coldie," "hittin' the piss," "suckin' a tube," "ripping interit," "goin' the rat with a tinnie," "gettin' amongst the neck oil" or just plain old "suckin' squirt."

In the interests of both culture and motocross, as well as improved international relations, I felt that we should resolve this little error and trust that you will inform McG. of his mistake.

Yours faithfully,
Ray Ryan
Westport Promotions,
Mt. Hawthorn, W. Australia

(*"Goin' the rat with a tinnie"???*)

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Dear MXA:

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Mike Meyer
La Palma, California

(*The only thing that will bring four-strokes back is a large dog whistle.*)

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Dear MXA:

While I found the first two examples of Bultaco's ad series tolerable at best, the third calling attention to other products of Husqvarna manufacture is clearly uncalled for. It is obvious that even a Husqvarna sewing machine can easily clean any Bultaco's clock.

Edward Harbur
S. Londonderry, Vermont

(*I didn't know Bultaco made clocks.*)

NYLON, LEATHER AND THE AMA

Dear MXA:

If the AMA bans nylon jerseys, what will we wear, leather? I for one don't want to be looking like "The Fonz" when I'm racing.

Tom Ruvolo
Los Angeles, California

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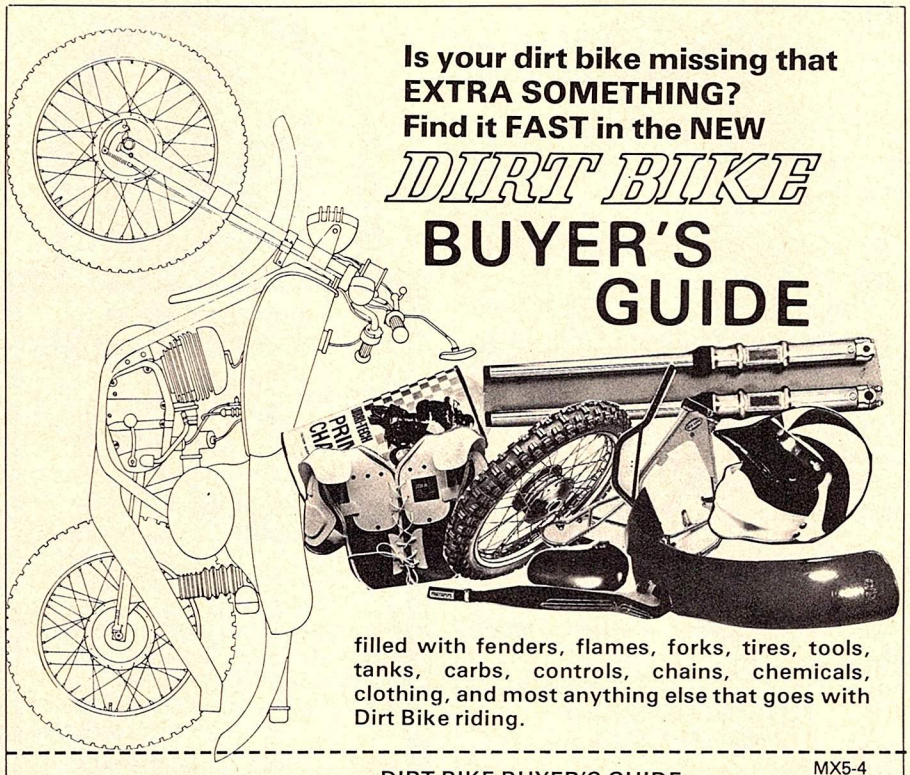

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MAINJET

Continued from page 4

nights before a race, but I'm normally down at the Jack-in-the-Box "super-preparing" my mind and body. After a Saturday night out who cares if the bike breaks. Those turkeys who work all night safety wiring, fine tuning and heavy wrenching just end up with a sense of personal failure when the bike eventually breaks. Who needs the pain?

For many riders on the National circuit sponsors are hard to come by, but for me they are knocking down the door. Once you develop a distinctive riding style, a style all your own, manufacturers will seek you out to advertise their products. Waiting around for a motorcycle company to sponsor you is a big zero. If you do win on one of their machines they're going to believe it was the bike. If you've got real class, then ride a real junker. That way you get all the credit for doing good and the bike takes the blame when you do poor. I was on the circuit about six weeks when I got my first sponsored ride. I credit landing a spot on TEAM SMIRNOFF more to post-race preparation than anything else. Recently I have been riding the JOHNSON & JOHNSON/ BACTINE SPECIAL in the 500 class.

Over the years people have been coming up to me at motocross tracks and asking questions about motocross stardom. I'd like to use the remaining space to answer some of the most common queries of the little people.

Q: HOW DO YOU GET GOOD STARTS?

A: This is a situation where spending a lot of cubic dollars on your engine to make it faster doesn't really pay off. I save all that hop-up money and give it to the starter. I've found that this enables me to get good fast starts.

Q: IS IT NECESSARY TO BELONG TO THE AMA?

A: Not unless you plan on racing near a hospital.

Q: IS IT POSSIBLE TO MAKE MONEY ON A STOCK CZ?

A: Yes, especially during harvest time in the midwest.

Q: MY SUZUKI RM250 MAKES A STRANGE PINGING NOISE AT

LOW RPM. WHAT COULD IT BE?

A: I used to own an RM like yours and mine made that same noise. I left it alone and it went away. I often wondered where it went, and now I know. Take good care of it.

Q: I'VE HEARD THAT BIG-TIME STARS USE AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION FLUID IN THEIR FRONT FORKS. IS THAT TRUE? WHAT DO YOU USE?

A: Yes, it's true. I personally use eight ounces of Merthiolate in my forks for motocross, and about six ounces of chicken soup for the ISDT.

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO NEGOTIATE A STEEP, FAST DOWNHILL?

A: In these cases, and I have had plenty of experience with downhills, I find it best to start at the bottom. If a referee is near this isn't always possible, so I walk the course very carefully before the race and place large pieces of foam rubber in strategic places.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET A FACTORY SPONSORSHIP?

A: Well, I practiced and practiced until I got very good. Then one day after a practice session the president of the factory called and asked if I'd like to race for them. I said, "Sure, Dad!" So my advice to all of you young hopefuls is to practice, practice, practice. It sure paid off for me.

If you want to be a motocross star and live the glamour life, you have to sacrifice. It is not all fun and frolic. It is long hours of driving, working on your bike in the Holiday Inn, eating in Burger Biggie, dealing with shady promoters and fighting the girls off with a stick. Yes, it's a tough life. Like I was saying to DiStefano and Hannah last week, "Boy, it sure has been a crummy year for me, why don't you guys quit."

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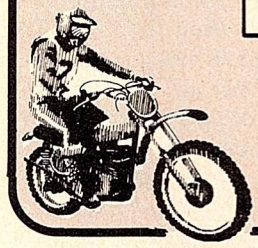

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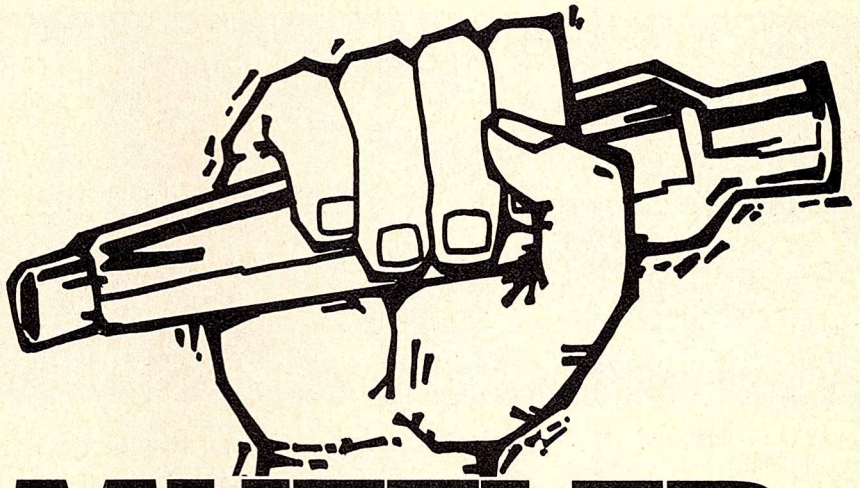

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Circle 21 on page 73

Continued from page 15

race the 250 temporarily and do well? I don't want to make a complete fool of myself. My first bike, four years back, was a Honda XR75. I learned most of my techniques on it and soon outgrew it. My dad says that I could successfully race if I just watch myself. But, I've seen a lot of very fast older guys racing 125s. I'm desperate, what do you think?

I really appreciate your time and enjoy the column. Thank you.

Craig Littlefield
Williamstown, Massachusetts

Who says you're supposed to start racing motocross on a smaller-bore bike? At 16 I started motocross on a 360 CZ. If you're strong enough and confident enough to safely handle your 250 through a hard 40-minute practice moto, you're ready to race it. In most cases I think a beginner is safer on a 250 than a 125. The advantage is that the larger bore size will pull you out of trouble and cover up many of your mistakes. If I were you, I'd save money for this season's racing and properly maintain your first motocross machine. After learning your basics, possibly try another size next year. But beware, racing a 125 is extremely costly. Repairs and preventative maintenance seem to be never-ending. Stick with your 250 Husky. I think you've made a wise choice. Take all the enjoyment you can and make your best effort possible when racing.

CRANKING PRESSURE

Would a DG high-compression cylinder head gasket make an increase in power or speed on my '74 CR125 Elsinore?

Raymond Hunold
Supalpa, Oklahoma

Cranking pressure is what is usually referred to as the amount of pounds the piston is producing when registered on a pressure gauge inserted into the spark plug hole. A fresh CR125 Honda will produce 126 pounds of pressure stock. I believe 155 pounds is the maximum pressure a 125 should produce. It seems 155 pounds will increase horsepower by about one throughout the entire rpm range. Anything over 155 pounds seems to overheat rapidly and lose power quicker than a stocker. By bolting on DG's high-compression head gasket your cranking pressure will increase from 126 pounds to approximately 148 pounds. The difference between the gaskets is that DG's is 5 thousandths thick and the stocker is 20 thousandths. I've found the difference of 18 thousandths usually brings cranking pressure up to 155 pounds. If your cylinder head is stock, I would recommend the thinner gasket. The only disadvantage is that if your cylinder head nuts are not torqued properly or your head is warped, the thin gasket may blow out.

LOW-BUCKS RACING

I have a 1975 Honda Elsinore 125 and I forward-mounted the shocks and put air forks in front. I am using my stock shocks and I don't have the money to get a new pair. I was wondering, if I put some Bel-Ray oil in the back and a new set of springs, would that help it? Can you tell me which weight of oil I should use and what pound spring rate? I weigh 115 pounds. Also, can you tell me how much air and oil in the front I should use? I do a lot of rough riding and I'm almost an amateur in New England. If it isn't too much, can

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Circle 23 on page 73

you give me a brief idea of how to disassemble my shocks and put the springs and oil in?

Rick Hanna
Dedham, Massachusetts

You know if you're writing the Wingnut he's going to tell you to do it right, or don't do it at all. But, I understand the money problem most of you guys have. If I were in your shoes and couldn't afford the proper rear shocks, I'd hold off forward-mounting your stockers and continue running them in the original position. Mainly because the stockers are at least an inch too long for forward-mounting and right away that's going to drastically affect the handling. Secondly, heavier replacement springs are not available for your stock shocks, and when you're increasing the rear leverage, by forward-mounting either end of the shock, you've got to increase the spring rate by at least 20 pounds. Third, the result of replacing the shock fluid with that of a heavier weight would not be enough to make the difference the increased leverage would require. Besides, heavier shock fluids will fade quicker, resulting in a shorter working period.

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I would appreciate it if you would help me out. I have a Carabela 200cc and I was wondering where I could get parts for it. I talked to a dealer in Ohio, and they said there is a Carabela dealer or manufacturing company in California. I was wondering if you would find some information on this dealer or company and write or call me.

Gary Kowalski
Strongsville, Ohio

Extensive checking shows only one manufacturer warehouse representative in the United States, and it just so happens he's not far from you. Carabela East is located in Alpha, Ohio. Warren Bales has a well-stocked warehouse of Carabela parts which can be ordered from anywhere in the U.S.A. Post Office Box 35, Alpha, Ohio 45301. The phone number is (513) 429-1092.

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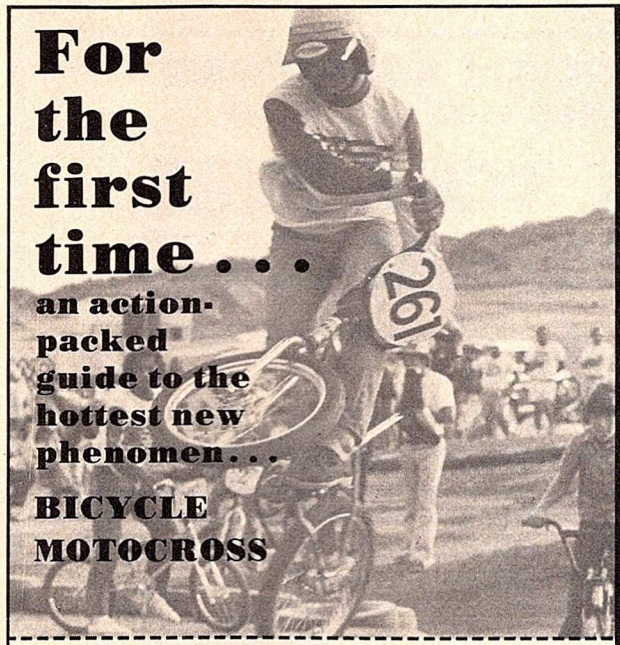

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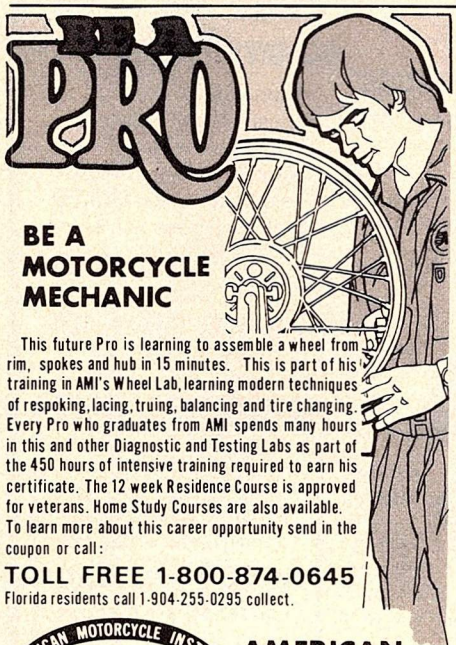

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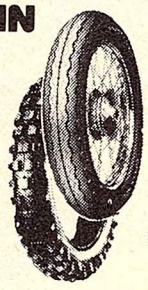

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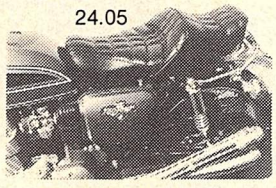

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Circle 19 on page 73

AMERICAN MX FINALS

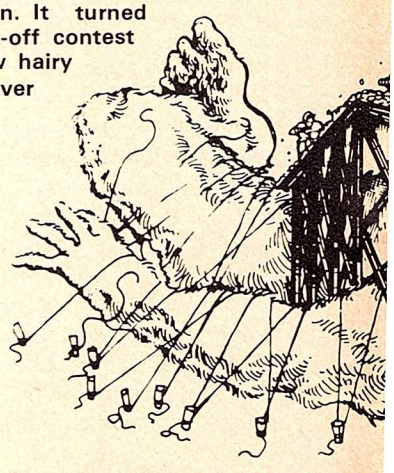
Continued from page 35

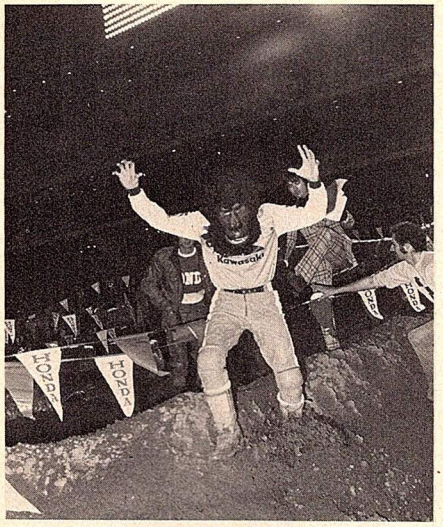
announcer Larry Huffman set his motormouth in action whipping the crowd into a frenzy of anticipation. The riders jiggled their goggles to clear the foggy night air out as the fireworks at the base of the scoreboard were lit. The 20-lap winner-take-all moment of motocross history was at hand. It had been a rocky struggle to get the new, easier to understand stadium format to this point. It had to pass AMA bureaucracy, the promoter's fine tuning, the riders' fears and now it had to meet the hardest test of all — the critical eye of the fans.

Marty Smith was out of the hole like a red rocket with Karsmakers playing mix and match with Tony DiStefano's yellow Suzuki and Kent Howerton's Husqvarna. Those four riders, who hold seven National Championships, cleared away from the remaining 20 riders in the pack and played a motorized game of tag. Mighty Marty held the lead under an early rush from Tony D and at the finish he held it from teammate Pierre Karsmakers as Honda went 1-2 in their own race. Less than 100 yards from the flag Kent Howerton stuck his Husky under the D's Suzook for third and the fans went wild.

It was the biggest single payday in stadium history and 39 riders went home with money in their leathers for a night's work. Some also went home with nothing, but next year the new format will be used throughout the whole eight-race Supercross series. The new short-

The King Kong jump was a bit of a hype as there wasn't sufficient flying room for the riders to take it wide-open. It turned into a shut-off contest with a few hairy nosedives over the top.





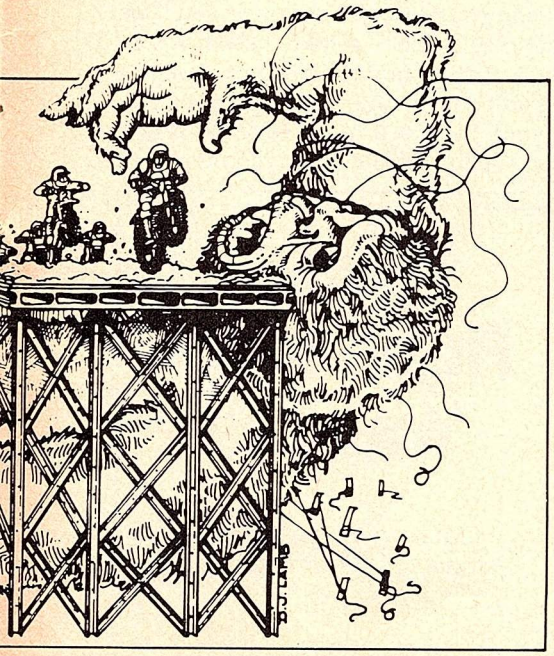
In honor of Anaheim Stadium's monstrous King Kong jump, Jimmy Weinert made a monkey out of himself for the rider presentation.

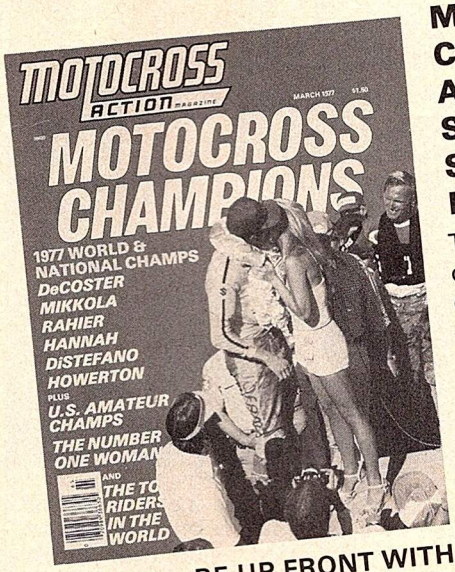
track-with-acne program will make stadium motocross more marketable to the local sportswriters and to the major television networks. And it will eventually make stadium motocross as big as NFL football.

Results

20-LAP FINAL: 1. Marty Smith (Hon). 2. Pierre Karsmakers (Hon). 3. Kent Howerton (Hus). 4. Tony DiStefano (Suz). 5. Jim Weinert (Kaw). 6. Gaylon Mosier (Mai). 7. Mickey Boone (Suz). 8. Rich Eierstedt (Hon). 9. Steve Wise (Suz). 10 Marty Moates (Oss). 11. Danny LaPorte (Suz). 12. Rex Staten (H-D). 13. Wayne Boyer (Bul). 14. Chuck Sun (Hus). 15. Pat Richter (KTM). 16. Frank Stacy (Pen). 17. Ken Zahrt (Bul). 18. John Savitski (Suz). 19. Danny Turner (Suz). 20. Mike Bell (Suz). 21. Warren Reid (Hon). 22. Jimmy Ellis (C-A).

15-LAP CONSOLATION: 1. Terry Clark (Kaw). 2. Gary Ogden (Suz). 3. Jeff Vidic (Suz). 4. Bruce McDougal (KTM). 5. Danny Swartz (Mai). 6. Jim Turner (Suz). 7. Charles Halcomb (Hus). 8. Milan Garrett (Suz). 9. Charles Cooper (Pen). 10. Rich Thorwaldson (Suz). 11. John Nelson (Suz). 12. David Haugh (Mai). 13. John Imbriale (Hus). 14. Mark Hately (Suz). 15. Richard Reeves (Hon).





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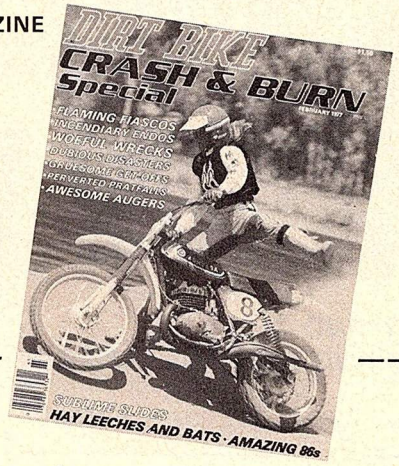

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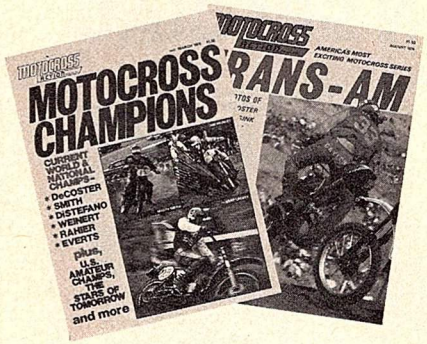

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SEMICS

Continued from page

to the original problem: To play football all you need is a hundred yards and you can find that anywhere, but for motocross you need a big chunk of terrain and there just isn't any around, at least not in Southern California. But there is a lot of good open land that's not being used back East and in the Midwest. That's where motocross is going to have to go for the good tracks and the good races.

"Supposedly it's up to the AMA to handle this. But I could sit here and say everything that the AMA should be doing, but getting them to do it is a whole different story. When you ask them about it, they've got a million reasons why they shouldn't. They're all stupid reasons, usually, but they just won't do it. It's been so screwed up. The riders have tried to get together to do something but it never seems to work. Seems simple, but it never works. The riders live far apart and are into different things. You can get them together to do something like we did a few times this year, but it never seems to get anywhere."

As the day was getting short, we asked Gary if he could sum up his philosophy about motocross, his role in professional racing and his place in the world as an athlete and as a person.

"Racing is all confidence and in order to have confidence in motocross, you have to be in shape. If you're out there racing and you're trying to conserve energy so you'll be able to finish the moto, then you're not putting out 100 percent and you won't have the confidence to do what you need to do to win. When you're in shape you can go out there

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and give it everything without worrying about getting tired. You can have fun and go for it and think about positive things like winning instead of getting tired. In professional racing you have to approach it this way if you want to be successful, because if you don't, somebody else will. Once you're in shape it's easy. Getting there is what's hard.

"I find that training makes me a better person. When I go to bed at night after working out really hard during the day, I feel really tired and ready to sleep and good inside because I've done something worthwhile.

"But if you're sticking to what you're doing, like I am, it gets lonesome. Socializing gets crazy. There's never any time to do the things people normally do. There's only two months of off-season when I can be a normal person. Good health and being in condition and racing are better than getting drunk and partying all the time. I like to wake up feeling good, not all burned out. I can't help it if people don't understand what it is to be a total racer. That's all there is. There ain't no more."

MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE

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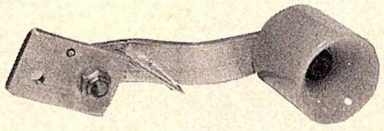

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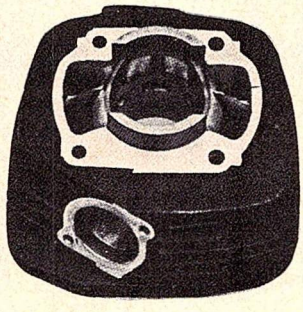

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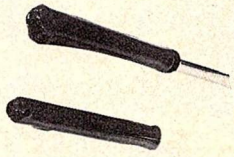

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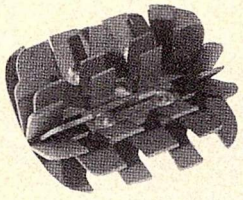

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2nd _____
3rd _____
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12. IN ORDER, WHICH FIVE MOTORCYCLE MAGAZINES DO YOU READ MOST OFTEN?
a) Dirt Bike
b) Motocross Action
c) Cycle
d) Cycle World
e) Cycle Guide
f) Popular Cycling
g) other

(insert letter)
1st _____
2nd _____
3rd _____
4th _____
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berm shot

Photo by Gerald G. Harvey, Sr.

Out on the track Hannah and Smith are, dare we say it, WFO and these two got involved in a bologna stare-down and missed the whole moto.

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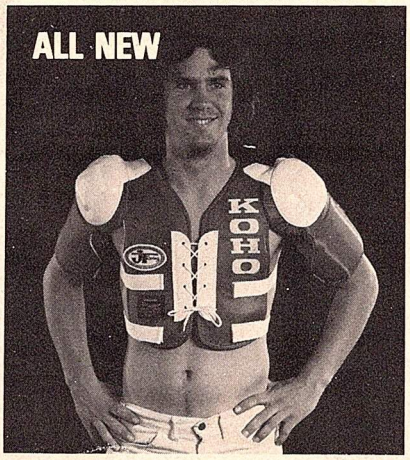

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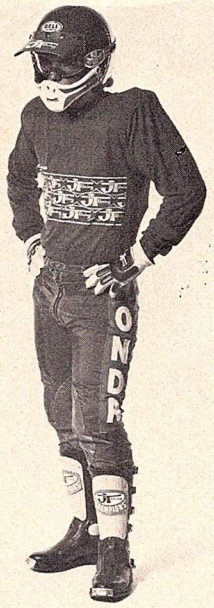

JT "unleathers" by Koho

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red, yellow, white & blue
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JT Team Logo (front only) $2.50

MX Pants (rear only)
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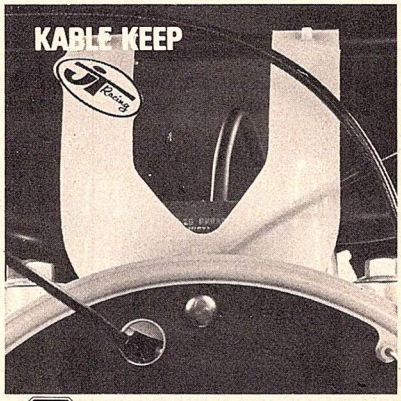

STOP

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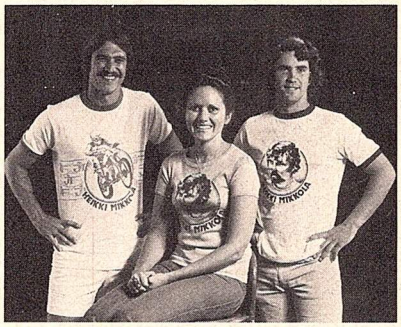

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It's a matter of engineering.

Bultaco engineers, including F.X. himself, have one responsibility. To design the best off road bike possible.

Contrast this with an engineer who divides his time between bobbins one week and brake shoes the next.

At Bultaco our engineering expertise results in an extremely dependable bike. One that makes riding so rewarding. Whether you're competing or cowtrailing. This dependability also lets us offer a full 60 day warranty on our bikes.

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